













# CHILDREN'S world

MARCH 1983





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Cover of the Month :  
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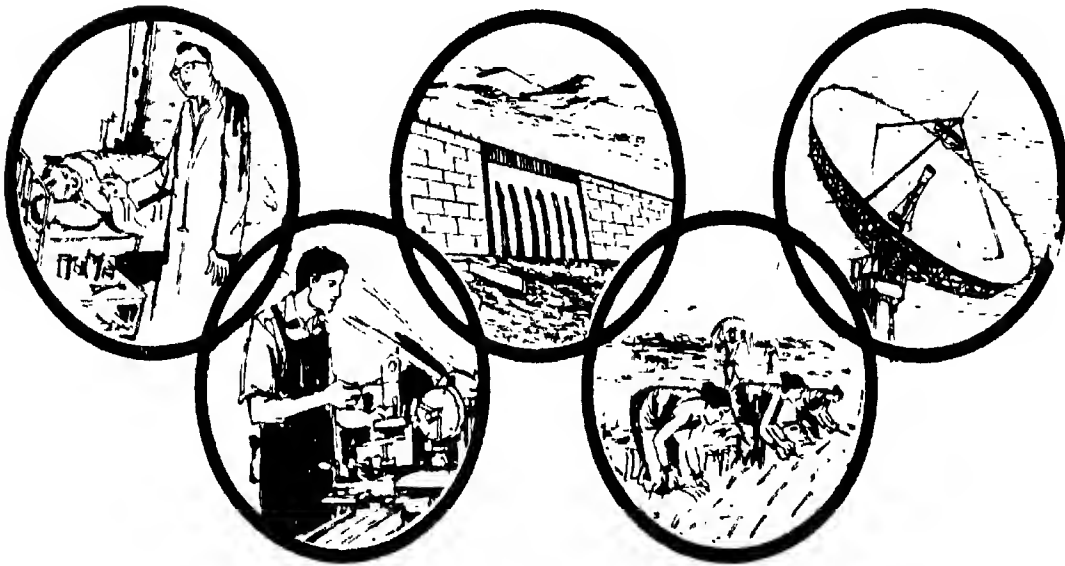
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# EVER ONWARD

India is the recipient of congratulations from all over the world for the success achieved by us as hosts of the 9th Asian Games

Stadia were built in record time. Colour television brought the games live into millions of homes all over the country and abroad. Computers, electronic exchanges, micro-wave and satellite links were smoothly and efficiently utilised in a mammoth network of services.



An apt example of what united endeavour and hard work can achieve.

Similar success can be achieved in other spheres of national development if we work in the same spirit.

**LET US ALL JOIN HANDS  
TO BUILD A STRONG NATION**

davp 82/557

# Two-way Talk

*Dear Editor,*

You may be surprised to know that I am doing my dentistry course; still I continue to read *Children's World* with the same pleasure as I did five years ago. I have preserved each and every copy of the last 5 years. I consider it as a great literary treasure. I like the Real Life Adventures the most. The January issue was superb. "Pop-pins" was very touching. Actually, it left my eyes in tears. "One Winter Morning" too was very moving, not to speak of "The Red Tie" in an earlier issue. "Revenge of the Ninths" was hilarious. The information on the "Mary Rose" was given in a simple fashion. I would like to see some new comics. Since "A Holiday Adventure" has been concluded, how about bringing back Perky? Just as the articles on scientists, how about a series on world's great musicians? Or the astronauts and cosmonauts? *Rupande Patel, Bombay*

I have been reading *Children's World* for the last three years. I enjoy reading it, and I liked "Kapish" the most. I now miss the comics very much. If you won't have "Kapish", I will not be interested in getting the magazine. *R. Dcepthi, Cochin*

Mr. Murthi's article "Over to Antarctica" was very good. I liked the photographs, too. I wish to write to the leader, Dr. Qasim.

*Debyani Sen, Nagpur*

I have not missed a single issue since May 1978. I like all those facts and fiction, discoveries and everything else.

*Sheeja Mary Mathew, Coimbatore*

The poems are the best items in *Children's World*. I wish you could have separate pages for poems and a larger number of them, too. I also like Perky's letters very much. I showed some copies to my friends, and they all agreed that it is a very good magazine.

*Kristika Shah, Thane*

*Dear Readers,*

First, all the good news! You have a new comics serial in "Inspector Garud". He is after a baby python that has been stolen and we assure you, there is more in it than meets the eye, so to say. Of course, we conclude Shanti's adventure at a wedding in this month's instalment, and we hope to give you something more of Shanti in the next issues, along with some items from King Features Syndicate, USA, beginning from the Annual Number. No, we won't give you their names, let them be surprises! We also start a long serial in this issue. "On the Kidnappers' Trail" is not any ordinary kidnapping story. Each of its half-a dozen instalments abounds in suspense and excitement. The location of the story is an ancient palace in Kerala and the main characters, a group of adventure-loving children on a picnic. What more do you want? In real life, too, children experience adventure, even though they would not have gone *after* it. We present to you the stories of sixteen such adventurers. Their "Tales of Bravery" will chill you to the bone! You would certainly want to take a ride when you read about world's fastest train, won't you? Turn to page 56. And before the first Indian cosmonaut goes into space in another 12 months, we give you an account of India's space achievements so far. Our India-Pakistan cricket feature takes a quick look at the heroes on either side. How we wish we had given you more photographs. Luckily, we have two other features with several photographs in colour. Now for the not-so-good news: you have yet another month's wait before you see (you may also *not*) your name among the "Juggle-a-word" prize-winners and in the "Pen-friends Corner". And so to the Annual Number!

**EDITOR**



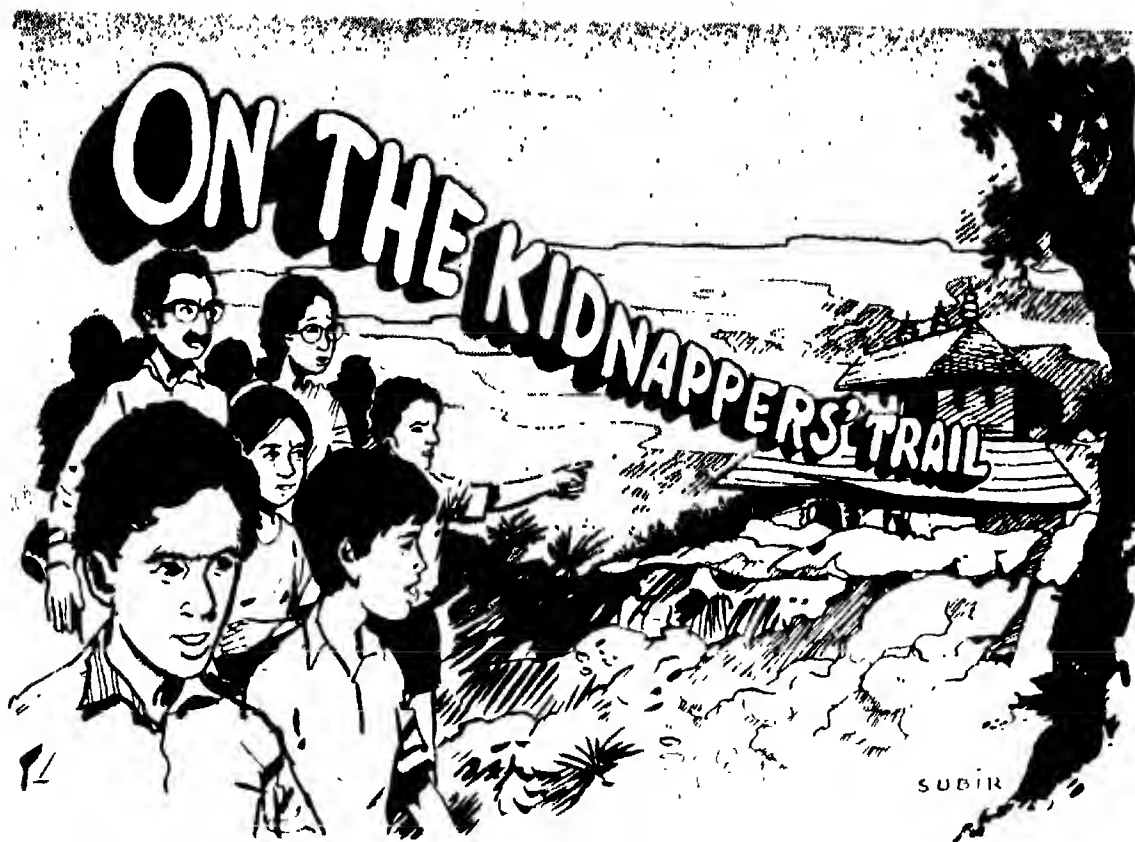


# Photo of the month

**"Readying for a ride" by Raj Kumar Sinha, Delhi**

**"Naughty Smiles" by T. Vishwanath, Delhi (Consolation prize)**





## CHAPTER I : A Picnic in the Offing

**T**HANK god, it's all over!" said Biju as he came out of the examination hall. "At one time I thought the last day would never come."

It was the last day of the annual examinations. Pratap, who had finished the paper earlier, was waiting for Biju.

"Yes, that's a heavy load off the mind," agreed Pratap. "Shall we go for a movie? Let's run home and ask our parents. I'm sure they'll agree."

"Why not? We're no longer kids. Next year, we're going to be high school students. HIGH, you see! We shouldn't any longer be treated as small children."

"Hev, what's the conspiracy about?" They heard a question from behind.

"Oh, the Police is coming," said Biju looking back.

'Police' Appu, who was running in from somewhere, stopped near them. "What're you two planning to do?" he asked, even

while gasping for breath. "I'm sure this P. Pratap wants to go for a film. What else can he think about?"

"Of course, we're going for a movie. We've to celebrate the end of the examinations," said Pratap with a 'why not?' look.

"I don't know why you people are so scared of the examination. Why don't you take it as another of the daily events, like taking a bath, going to school, or . . . or going for a movie?"

Biju or Pratap, or for that matter most children, could not treat examinations as just another event. It was an ordeal they had to go through once every few months.

They envied Appu who never shared their fear of examinations. He prepared for the examinations just as he prepared for any other day in school. He was not at all scared. But, then, he was not scared of anything.

It was Appu's daredevil nature that earned him the nick-name 'Police'. He was not in

the least afraid of going out in the dark. He was not scared of the teacher's cane. In fact, he found some kind of pleasure in going after adventure. If there was any place where others were afraid to go, Appu would go there immediately.

One day, about a year back, Appu was on his way to the school, when he saw two ruffians grappling with each other in front of the school. A small crowd had collected around them. But none dared to intervene and separate the two who were biting each other. Appu did not wait to watch. He put his books down, charged with his head bent, and pushed himself between the fighters. As they were separated from each other, the crowd surged forward and held the two apart. While the people tried to pacify them, Appu collected his books and coolly walked into the school.

Appu's action did not, however, go unnoticed. The story reached the Headmaster's ears and he summoned Appu. The boy, who had by then become something of a hero in the school, was sternly warned by the Headmaster for 'fighting with ruffians'. "Don't act a policeman!" thundered the Headmaster. And Appu became 'Police' Appu!

Pratap, who remembered the incident, said, "You can say all that about examination. After all, you're a policeman."

"And you are a P," said Appu with a smile.

Appu, actually, did not resent being called Police. In his heart of hearts, he loved it. It was a kind of recognition of his bravery.

But Pratap's case was different. He, it was said, once wet his pants. That was when he was a kid, a student of Class I. But unfortunately for him, the story of his disgrace got promoted with him and he came to be called P(ants) Pratap. His only consolation was the thought that anybody who heard it would merely take it to be his initial!

"Forget it," said Appu. "And forget your silly movie idea. I've something much better."

"What's it? Fighting with the temple bull, perhaps," Biju felt upset that the movie programme might not come off.

"Cut it out," said Appu. He pretended not to notice the sneer on Biju's face. "You remember, our teacher had promised to take us on a picnic. Let's go and tell him, we want to go now."

"That's not a bad idea," agreed Pratap, the frown on his face slowly disappearing. "But let's wait for Gopi and Smitha and Vinita. We'll all go to the teacher together. The bookworms must be coming out now. See, here's Smitha!"

"By the way, how was today's paper?" asked Biju. He could not just forget the examination as a thing of the past. "I'm afraid, I haven't answered two questions fully."

As they chatted about the examination, their classmates came out of the hall one by one. After the final bell had gone, all of them marched to the Staff Room. Their class teacher, Rajasekhara, was happy to see all of them together again.

"Come in," he invited them into the room. "What brings all of you together? I hope you've all fared well this time."

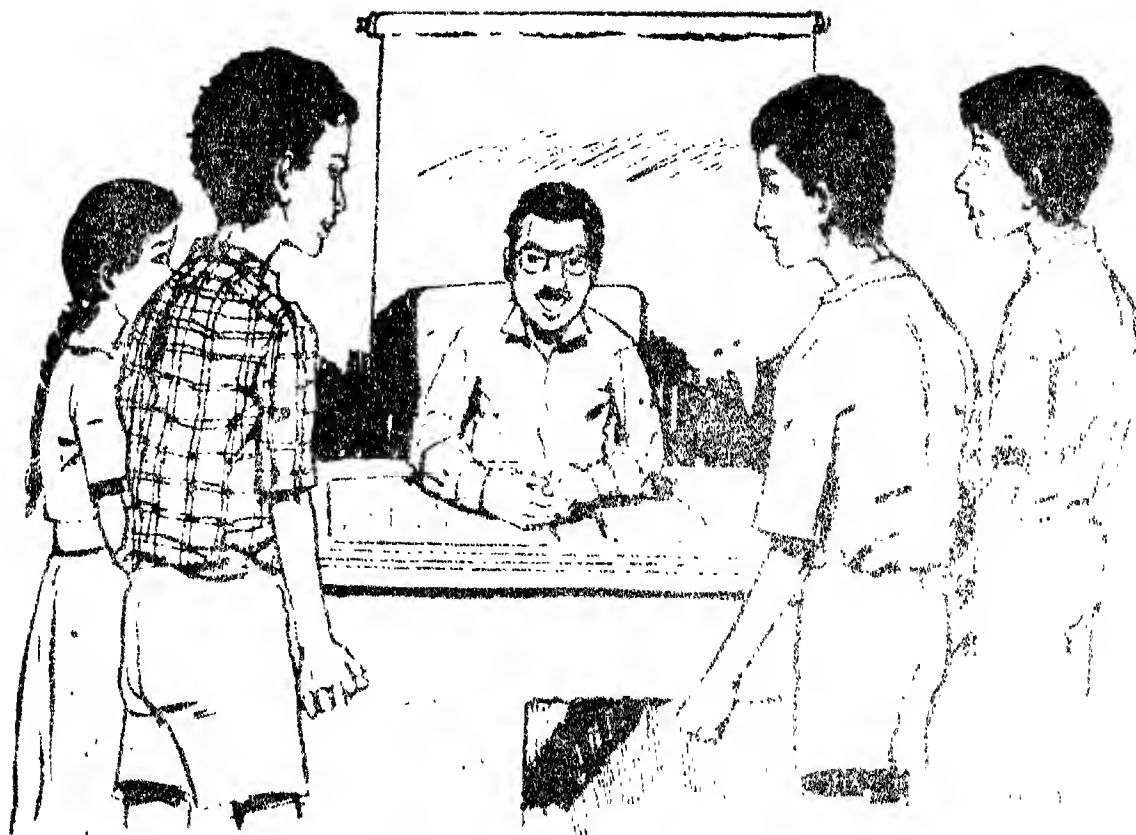
"Yes, sir, we've done well," they said in a chorus.

"Examinations are easy for those who prepare for them," the teacher said with a smile. "But I'm sure you didn't come here just to tell me you've done very well in the examination. There is something else. Come on, out with it!"

The children looked at one another saying, "You tell him", "You tell him."

Police Appu was the one who came forward. "Sir, you had promised to take us on a picnic. Now that the exams are over, we'd like to go somewhere."

"Oh, yes. I'd almost forgotten about it."



Shall we go next Sunday? That would give us four days to get ready. Where shall we go?"

"Sunday is fine, sir. Shall we go to the dam?" asked Smitha.

"No, Smitha, the dam is quite a distance away. We've to select a place within say 25 kilometres, so that the journey does not take a lot of time. How about Koickal Palace?"

"Let's go to Kali Hills." That was Appu.

"Oh, no. No, sir, I don't want to go there." several voices opposed the idea.

It was just natural. Even grown-up people did not dare to go to Kali Hills. Even in the day-time. The place was believed to have all that the local people dreaded—spirits and ghosts and all sorts of evil forces.

"Koickal Palace is better, sir," said John. "People say there are several rooms with secret doors and false walls in the palace. There is also a cave somewhere in there. We can explore all that."

"There is also a beautiful garden between the Palace and the Pamba river. It gets sub-

merged during the monsoon, but emerges beautiful afterwards. It must be the ideal place for a picnic now," said the teacher and waited for the children's reaction.

"Okay, it's the Palace, then," said Rajasekhhar. "I'll request the Headmaster to give us the school bus. We must take with us enough food and water; you will get nothing to eat near the Palace."

"We'll all bring our lunch boxes and water bottles," said Kumar.

"No, that's not fair in a picnic," the teacher pointed out. "All of us should bring whatever we can. We'll pool them and then eat. You come back here at 10 tomorrow. We'll then decide the items. Meanwhile, tell your classmates about the picnic. Whoever wants to come is welcome. Only, they should get their parents' permission."

The children were happy. It was a grand way to begin the vacation. They walked back home imagining the fun they would have on Sunday.

*(Turn to page 63)*

# Getting Even With Chirpy

IT was 'holi'. A group of little animals had collected in the clearing outside Chirpy Mynah's house.

All the animals carried 'pichkaaris' in their hands. Big pails of coloured water stood here and there. The animal children had all come out to play 'holi'.

Then, why were they still waiting?

"Just wait till that naughty Chirpy Mynah comes out of his house. I'll give him such a ducking in this ice-cold water that he'll never forget it all his life!" threatened Bholu Bear, pointing to a large bucket of water. "That'll serve him right for slipping ice-cubes down my shirt-back the other day."

"And I'll speckle Chirpy's face with red, yellow and green spots," cooed Gutru Dove angrily. "Last 'holi', Chirpy dotted me all over with red spots. My Mum was certain I'd got a rash, and she forced me to stay in bed for a week!"

"Oof! that mischievous Chirpy — I can hardly wait to get my hands on him," broke in Padma Parrot. "The other day, he painted a beard and moustache on my face while I was asleep. When I went out, everyone was laughing at me, and I just couldn't understand what was wrong!"

Padma's red beak went redder as she remembered that incident. So, as revenge, she planned to do the same to Chirpy.

"Hold him tight when he comes," Padma told the Wild-ptg twins. "I'll 'paint' him prettily, too."

The Wild-pigs readily agreed, for,

very often Chirpy had teased them by tying their curly little tails together!

"While you paint his face, I'll paint hideous designs all over his body," declared Motu Jumbo. "Last Sunday, the wicked fellow purposely fooled me into sitting on a fresh-painted garden chair!"

So on it went. Everyone seemed to have a complaint against Chirpy Mynah, the naughtiest little animal in Jungle Town. Everyone was now waiting for this chance to get even with Chirpy.

The children were so busy talking that they hardly noticed an old fellow coming towards them.

"Are you kids playing 'holi'?" he asked, in a shaky sort of voice. Half bent with age, he leaned heavily on his walking-stick. His head was covered with silver-white hair, and his eyes were hidden behind thick glasses.

"This must be Grandpa Mynah, Chirpy's grandfather," whispered Betty Bat to her friends. "Chirpy told me his Grandpa would be visiting them soon."

"You're right," whispered Micky Monkey. "He looks just like Chirpy. You can make out that they're of the same family."

"Namaste, Grandpa!" said the children politely. They knew all about Grandpa Mynah. Years ago, he had been a Maths Master, and had taught — and even spanked — their mothers and fathers in Jungle School. Of course, Grandpa Mynah had now retired. But people still remembered and respected Mynah Masterji.

"Ah, how I loved playing 'holi' in my younger days!" said Grandpa with a sigh.

"You can play with us, Grandpa," said Bholu Bear, respectfully touching Grandpa Mynah's feet with 'gula' just as one was supposed to do to one's elders.

"Shall I?" asked Grandpa eagerly. "Then get set—holi hai!"

Before Bholu had realised it, Grandpa picked up a bucket filled with ice-cold water and poured it all over Bholu.

"Ooh!" squealed Bholu, drenched in that C..O..L..D water!

"But, Grandpa, that was plain water, not coloured water," explained Gutru Dove.

"Really?" exclaimed Grandpa. "Bring me some bright red water, kids."

With that, Grandpa Mynah started dotting Gutru Dove's face with bright

red polka dots. "Much more interesting dotting your face than just colouring it a plain red, eh, young Dove?" laughed Grandpa. "Aren't you Dovey Dove's son? I taught your mother when she was your size."

So, poor Gutru's face was once again covered with bright red spots! But he couldn't protest against an elderly person like Grandpa Mynah, could he? He only hoped his Mum wouldn't fuss, like she did last time.

Then Padma Parrot came to offer 'gula' to Grandpa. "Ah!" he cried. "Let's turn this pretty young lady into a fierce dacoit."

He soon painted enormous moustaches, a bristling beard and a black eye on Padma's face. Everyone giggled. Padma felt embarrassed, indeed, but she bore it all silently.

Next, Grandpa smeared green colour all over Micky Monkey's face and tail.



"Ever seen a green-tailed monkey, folks?" he quipped.

Then he dipped half potatoes, marked 'FOOL' in red, yellow and purple colour, and stamped them all over Motu Jumbo's vast back.

"That's picturesque!" cried Grandpa. "I remember how angry your Grandma was when I did this to her when we were kids!"

Jumbo felt awkward. But he docilely permitted Grandpa to make a fool of him.

So Grandpa went on,—covering them with stripes, smears and daubs in all odd colours till the animal children looked positively hideous. But they all bore his antics with good humour.

"I've had my fun, kids," said Grandpa at last. "Now I retire. You play 'holi' among yourselves. Come to my house later, for your 'holi' sweets."

Just as Grandpa was leaving, Gutru Dove asked, "Grandpa, where's Chirpy? Won't he play 'holi'?"

"Chirpy? Why, here he is!"

To everyone's surprise, Grandpa suddenly stood erect, and threw off his stick. Before anyone could bat an eyelid, 'Grandpa's' silver-white wig and big spectacles had come off, too. In front of them stood Chirpy Mynah, grinning merrily!

"Who d'you think played 'holi' with you so long?" laughed Chirpy. "Bye, friends, happy 'holi'!"

Chirpy didn't wait a second longer. He flew straight to the tallest tree and hid himself.

At last the animal children recovered from their immense surprise. "It was Chirpy who all along made fools of us!" said Bholu Bear, still shivering from his ice-cold bath!

"Oh!" moaned Padma Parrot, shaking her moustached and bearded face. "You just can't get even with that naughty Chirpy Mynah!"

S. Banerjee







## THE NEED OF THE HOUR

**A**N act of bravery—is only a relative term, or so it seems! Year after year, children between the ages of 5-16 from every corner of the country seem to be proving it is so. Ask them how they could be so brave when faced with danger—rescuing a child from a burning hut, or a friend from drowning in a canal, or a child from kidnappers, or raising a hue and cry when the robbers peppered you with bullets—or fighting single-handed with a wild bear or a lion, or a tiger, pulling your friend to safety from the jaws of death in the form of a live wire!

Oh, the list goes on; golden words on silver sheets cannot commend the

acts of supreme valour that our little brothers and sisters have shown over and over again to prove that children or their deeds are in no way less magnificent than those of their peers. Yet, when you talk to these little haloed angels, their air of disdain and modesty leave you wondering. "Brave—ME?" they seem to say. "I only did what was required at that moment, that's not bravery, it's merely presence of mind," they seem to try and convince you. "It's Rana Pratap and his horse Chetak who were brave—we're mere mortals." Mortals, nevertheless, with great compassion, a great awareness, and a great presence of mind—little people who

are truly GREAT!

In 1982, apart from the Sanjay Chopra and Geeta Chopra (bravest boy and girl) awards, 12 other children were given the Bravery awards. Outstanding among them is Anil Shri Krishna Kale (10) of Maharashtra who, though handicapped, had a 'braver' mind than his friends, when faced by a poisonous snake. While all his friends ran away, Anil frightened the wriggly poisonous creature so much that, forgetting it was going to sting Anil's friend Sonali Gandhi, the serpent merely slithered away!

For Praveen Kumar Sharma's parents, January 24, 1983 was a sad-happy day. Their darling 16-year-old boy, who had won the coveted Bravery medal, was not there to receive it in person. He had died for what he had got it—he saved a drowning boy from the Sirsa canal in Narwana, but Praveen could not save himself and was drowned.

Vallirani of Tamilnadu is the only other girl to get the award this year. On a hot April day in 1981, she, her friend Shanti, and their classmates wandered towards an irrigation canal to quench their thirst. Shanti, eager to lap up the cool, refreshing water, leaned too low, and fell 30 feet down the canal. While the other girls panicked, Vallirani raced down the steps, grabbed Shanti by her skirt, and pulled her up.

Bharat Mani of Uttar Pradesh, Bhasker J. Chimakrao of Maharashtra, Deb-jyoti Chetia of Assam, Punjabi Bommanna of Gujarat, and Sudhir Babu of Kerala are all brave boys who were responsible for saving either a friend or father or little children from drowning in pools, canals, wells, or ponds. Whereas six-year-old Sirish Bhaskar Salgaonkar of Maharashtra dragged Sangeeta, a 5-year-old girl, out of a gutter filled

with cow-dung.

Twelve-year-old Revaram fought single-handed with a bear while returning from the forest. His younger brother and the nine women who were with him merely fled in despair.

Eight-year-old Ajmal Khan Gauhar is not a one-act-brave-guy. He's a one man 'Findouter' and has been giving the police valuable clues to track down criminals. Once before that he dragged a man hit by a railway engine and lying helpless on the track from being run over by another train. While others looked on, Ajmal just dragged the man out of harm's way. Recently, he saved several people from a fire in a dairy godown by promptly informing the fire brigade. Before this, he had won accolades from district as well as State authorities.

Nine-year-old Anil and his friend Joseph were returning from school when Joseph stepped on a livewire. Passersby only 'tchtched' in sympathy, but did nothing to save the lad. Disgusted by the lack of action on the part of the grown-ups, Anil grabbed Joseph's shoes and dragged him away from the live-wire that clung to him lovingly.

Kunjumon of Kerala, a roadside tea-stall worker, proved it is worthwhile to keep your wits about you. For, Rajendran, travelling in a bus, stabbed his friend James and under cover of darkness tried to flee. The other passengers in the bus merely raised a hue and cry. But Kunjumon swung into action. Even though he was stabbed several times, he did not let go of Rajendran till the villagers grabbed him and handed him over to the police. Kunjumon and James were rushed to hospital—James died, but fortunately Kunjumon survived to receive his Bravery award in person.

(Turn to page 19)

**• SANJAY CHOPRA •**

# FISHES DON'T EAT FLOWERS

SIX-year-old Rikhi and Pratyush Gautam were trying out a new method of catching fish. Would they rise to the bait of the prettiest flowers in the garden? The fish in the pond seemed to be a pretty choosy lot. They merely sniffed at the flowers, as though Rikhi and Pratyush were offering these to them for their fragrance and not as food. But the fact they sniffed at them convinced Rikhi that they were sure to nibble any minute now. He bent low, then lower, ready to grab a fish the moment it was still. He was all concentration now, watching the wriggly creatures swim under the shiny water, the flowers that Pratyush flung, bobbing about on the surface. 'Ah! there he comes,' thought Rikhi as he bent over — straight into the pond, right in front of Pratyush's eyes, bulging with horror, his hand clutching a pretty flower hung-

midair — for a second, as he stood transfixed, — his mouth wide open. Screaming, he realised, would not help poor Rikhi who had by now settled at the bottom of the pond, which was some distance from their respective houses. He ran to the main road and, short of dragging the three men chatting by the roadside to the pond, did everything to assure them of the urgency of rescuing his drowned friend. He pulled and tugged at their coats, but it did not affect the two having an argument. The third, bored by their dispute, decided to lend the agitated child an ear. Humouring the desperate Pratyush, he walked in lazy, comfortable strides behind him, as he raced to the pond. One glance from a distance and the potential 'rescuer' was convinced that no child could be seen at the bottom of the pond, and that Pratyush was pulling a fast one! He turned to go. "Can't you see his clothes, for heaven's sake?" Pratyush practically yelled in desperation. Sensing the little boy's sincerity and 'seeing' his unshed tears, the man relented. He hastened to the pond and, alarmed at seeing Rikhi settled at the bottom with no movement, he swung into action. Diving in, he brought Rikhi to the surface. Pratyush, relieved to see his friend might yet live, sent up a silent prayer and helped the man rush Rikhi home and on to the hospital.

Today, months after the event, Pratyush is richer by two things. He has his friend Rikhi by his side, as they lazily wend their way by the pond (they don't bait fish with flowers or anything else any longer) and, when he goes back home from Delhi after the Republic Day parade, he'll have the Sanjay Chopra Bravery Award to show Rikhi. A medal he got for having saved Rikhi's life!



*Pratyush Gautam and Hunnibai*

**T**HE night of July 30, 1982. Time 9.15. The place, a sleepy village in Madhya Pradesh. Twelve-year-old Hunnibai Rathor, moon-faced and plump, walked by her mother's side in companionable silence after a tiring day. In the distance, a train shrieked, as it chugged out of the railway station from where Hunnibai and her mother Annibai were coming.

Matching their footsteps in a brisk pace, Hunnibai and Annibai crossed the dark, unpeopled lane which would lead them to the road home. In the eerie darkness, they merely heard the shushed rustle of clothes, as if someone was moving swiftly. Before she could react, Annibai felt the 'mangalsutra' round her neck being given a violent tug. The scream that rose in her throat turned into a mere choked sound, as the 'mangalsutra' biting into her flesh cut off the sound. Hunnibai, sleepy and tired, forgot to be scared or to scream and, even as she rushed to her mother's aid, she saw the wicked assailant thrust a knife into her mother's chest. She should have been shocked, frightened, terrified, as a child barely twelve seeing her mother in dire danger would have been. She should have been rendered helpless! But Hunnibai reacted in none of the predicted ways. In fact, action was so swift, that before she knew it, she was grappling with the chain-snatcher. Stabbed in the stomach, Hunnibai still did not let go of the more powerful man, and even as he succeeded in snatching her mother's 'mangalsutra', she, Hunnibai, succeeded in keeping hold of his collar. And as he freed himself to escape with a most valuable prize, he left Hunnibai with a souvenir — his shirt collar. It seemed a poor exchange for her mother's valuable 'mangalsutra,' but

# A COLLAR FOR A CHAIN

CHOPRA AWARD.

still the wounded and bleeding Hunnibai hung on to it. It was much later, after the chain-snatchers had escaped that the two wounded women, weak with loss of blood, could raise a hue and cry to be rescued and taken to hospital.

As Hunnibai and Annibai recovered in hospital, the police with the help of the shirt collar — the best clue they could have got — began to solve the mystery of the missing 'mangalsutra'. It wasn't difficult to trace the chain-snatchers. The collar in Hunnibai's hand still bore the tailor's label. The tailor in Raipur was a meticulous fellow. Yes! His records could supply the name and address. The name and address did house the criminal and his accomplices, and they did have Annibai's 'mangalsutra'. The 'mangalsutra' was restored to Annibai Rathor. But neither Annibai nor the police nor all the people who learnt of her bravery (and even the criminals themselves, I suspect) were willing to let Hunnibai's great act of bravery go unnoticed. She was recommended for a 'Bravery Award'. But even that was 'small' recompense for her 'big' deed, felt the committee who gave the Awards. Hunnibai, they felt, for her great courage and wonderful presence of mind deserved nothing less than the Gita Chopra Award for the bravest girl in 1982.

Vaijayanti Tonpe



**A**CTUALLY, shipworms are not worms. Their long, slender, soft, and naked bodies had, in the past, made scientists consider them as worms. They are, however, not related to the worm family at all.

They belong to the class Bivalvia and are consins of clams, oysters, and mussels. Like them, the shipworms also have two shells. But the shells are very small and irregularly shaped, and are situated at the anterior end of the elongated soft body. Usually, they cannot be distinguished as shells. The internal structure of the shipworm is similar to all other bivalvia. There is a thin, glistening protective cover, made up of calcium carbonate, for the naked body. The shipworm itself builds this cover.

They usually hide in the heart of timber and are not visible from outside. This is because their external opening is tiny. When the wood is cut, we can see the long, cylindrical holes occupy-

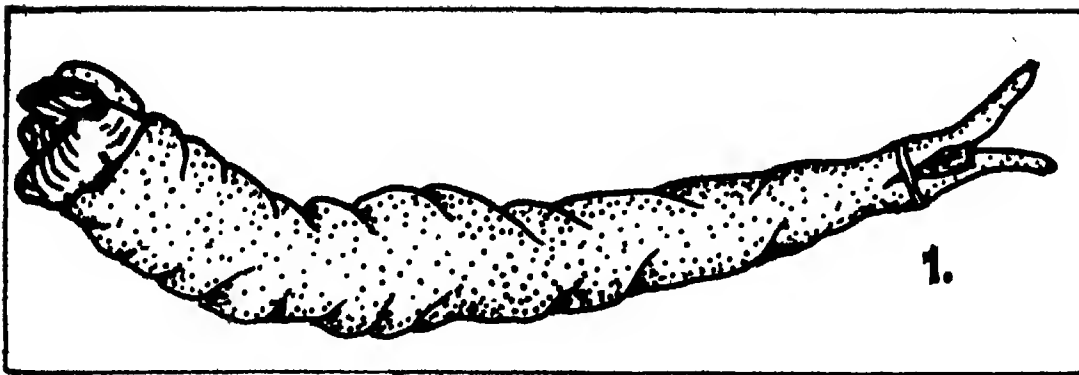
ing almost the whole area inside.

Their food is wood. You may be surprised to learn this and wonder how these soft bodied creatures can eat such hard, strong matter. They use their little shells, seen on the anterior end of the body, to drill the wood (Fig.1). The saw dust that comes out of drilling goes straight into their mouths. Shipworms possess a powerful enzyme in the crystalline style and the digestive diverticula. It enables them to digest the cellulose with the help of the enzyme. This adaptation allows them to remain throughout their lives inside the dark wood, cut away from the beautiful world outside. As they progress with their drilling, they also grow in size. Shipworms four to five feet long have been found in certain parts of the world.

This is how they breathe: There are two siphons at the posterior end of the body, which is on the surface of the wood—where they make contact with water. Water enters through the inhalent siphon. Gills absorb oxygen from water and expel carbon dioxide into the water. The used water is discharged through the exhalent siphon. Respiration takes place through this repeated action.

At the rear end of its body, there are a pair of calcareous structures known as "pallets". When they desire to close the hole—the door of their house—a pair of calcareous structures are thrust into the hole and thus it is closed. No enemy or even water can then penetrate inside. When there are fishing boats on shore, the shipworms cleverly attach themselves thus and temporarily escape from draught.

Their reproduction is an interesting process. They are males when they first attain maturity. As they become older,



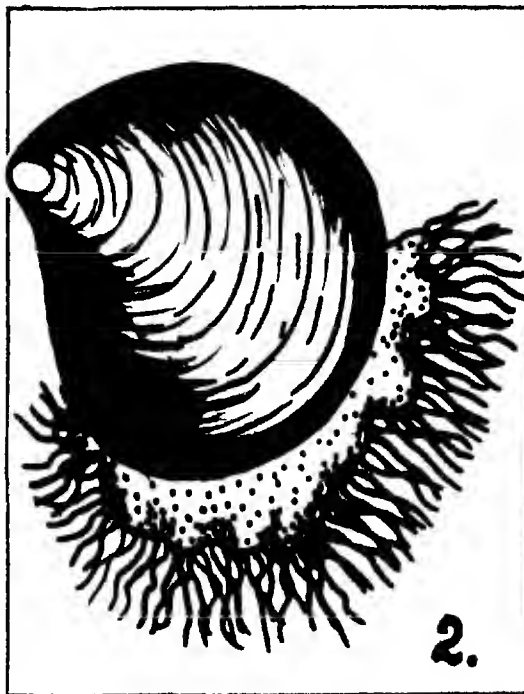
they change sex and become females. Between the male and female stage, they are both male and female, i.e., hermaphrodite. Fertilization takes place outside the body. Rarely does it take place inside. A fertilized ovum becomes a "larva" (Fig. 2). It leads a free planktonic life, drifting on the water surface. Even though the adults cannot move about, the larvae distribute their race far and wide. If the larvae happen to come across any timber, naturally they attach themselves to it. Then these larvae change their shape to small shipworms and start drilling, which is their life's mission. They bore effectively with their cutting tools and grow astonishingly. Thus the strong timber structure becomes fragile and hollow.

The innocent looking, naked, soft-bodied animals are the number one enemies of voyagers. These little animals were mainly responsible for the destruction of Columbus's ships. They have destroyed countless ships and are continuing with such destruction. They destroy fishing boats, country canoes, fishing canoes, piers, and bridges. Ancient navigators dreaded the shipworm. For shipworms bore even the trunk and roots of trees growing in marshy areas. The damage caused by this little creature is enormous. In India, Dr. G. Becker estimated the cost of periodic replacement of the fishing craft damaged by these pests at Rs. 2,500,000.

Scientists have invented different types of paints and tried many preventive measures, both electrical and mechanical. But they were unable to destroy them completely or in a successful manner. In spite of all man's protective means and measures, shipworms are carrying on their relentless destruction.

There are many associated animals that live on the gills and in the mantle cavity of shipworms. Ciliated protozoans are the chief among them, like the commensalic hydroid, *Eutima*, which lives embedded in the gill lamella of the host. Many of the ciliates and the hydroid are new to science.

The hydroid, *Eutima commensalis*,



grows on the gills of the shipworm just like a plant on soil (Fig. 3). The basal disc of the hydroid is embedded in the tissue of the gill lamella facilitating effective attachment of the hydroid to the host. Small planktonic organisms present in the water are captured by the hydroid's tentacles. Thus, it receives protection and facility to get food. It starts its life as a single individual, having one polyp. As they grow, more polyps develop and form a colony. A large colony looks like a shrub with



many branches. Small medusae are developed from the hydroid and pass out through the exhalent siphon of the host. These liberated medusae lead a free swimming life as plankton. The liberated medusa does not swim actively. Any particle of food captured with the help of the tentacle is conveyed to the mouth through a general contraction of the umbrella. In this process, the height of the medusa is apparently reduced and the mouth is brought closer to the velar opening, facilitating the passage with ease of the prey into the mouth. It grows and develops the sex organs. Medusae are the adult individuals in the sexual phase of their life cycle. The fertilized egg becomes the planula larva and since it happens to be in the mantle cavity of the shipworm, the life cycle is repeated.

The micellular *Nucleocorbula adhaerens*, lives in the mantle cavity of the shipworm. The general shape of the mature organism is given in Fig. 4. The shape may vary according to the age of the animal. The largest animal measures upto 0.5 mm in size. The barrel-shaped body is completely covered with small body cilia. Long cilia are seen at the oral end of the body. These cilia help to catch the prey. Usually, other ciliata in the mantle cavity form food for them. There is a ciliated aboral disc ("sucker") and the animal gets firmly attached with its help. There is also a horn-like projection in the region. The macromucous is branched and shaped like a basket.

When the animal is separated from the host and placed in sea water on a slide, it swims vigorously in all directions. It moves speedily with the anterior sucker-like portion directed forwards in a characteristic swerving motion. It exhibits different kinds of

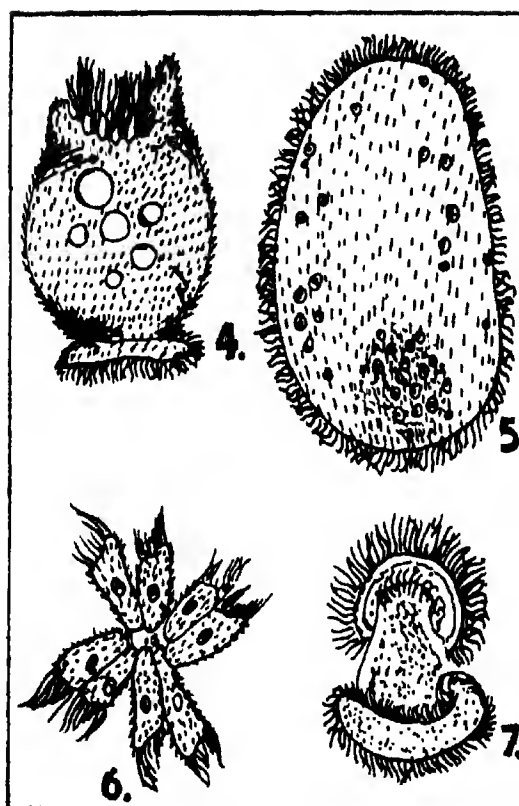


movements. It moves in a clockwise spiral fashion. It also moves in anti-clockwise rotation. At times, it makes very gentle somersault-like movements.

**Thigmozon Fencheli** also live in the mantle cavity of the host. It has an oval shaped body (Fig. 5) covered with thick pellicle and fine cilia all over. The mouth is situated on the ventral and posterior side. The macronucleus is branched and occupies the central part. They are not seen in large numbers as *Nucleocorbula*. They feed on unicellular algae and other minute organic matter in the mantle cavity.

**Boveria teredinidi**, another ciliate living in the mantle cavity of the shipworm, has been recorded by earlier scientists. But their association with other individuals and their colonial nature has not been recorded. They attach themselves to each other with their aboral end and look like a full-blossomed sunflower (Fig. 6). Generally, it is found as a single individual. In a colony, the number of individuals may vary from 2 to more than 120.

Two species of **Trichodina** were observed with shipworms. Out of the two, **Trichodina balakrishnia** is new.



Many species of the family Trichodinidae are found to occur in fishes. They attach themselves on to the gills, as shown in Fig. 7. A large number of small curved spines are seen and these structures help them attach themselves to the mantle of the shipworm.

V. Santha Kumari

(Continued from page 13)

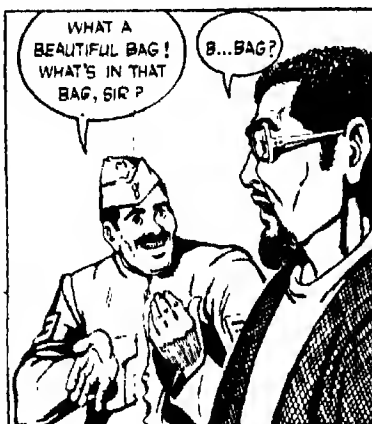
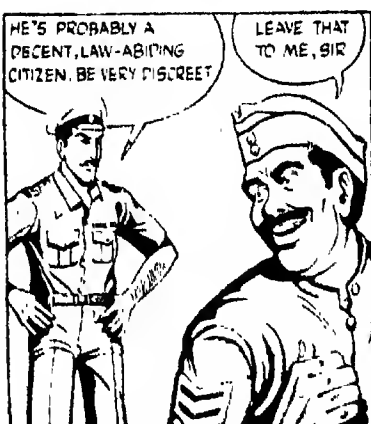
Sudhir Kumar (13) showed what a keen detective he could make when he grew up. A stranger asked him strange questions. Instead of answering them like a nice, polite boy, he got suspicious, wondering why a strange man should be so interested in him. Putting two and two together, he realized the fellow couldn't be anything but a kidnapper. Once he realized that, Sudhir yelled for dear life. The potential kidnapper hit him and slapped him, threatened him but all to no avail. Sudhir kept yelling, till peo-

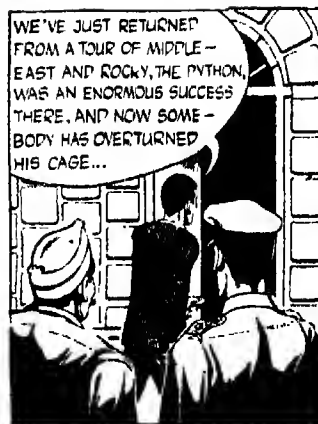
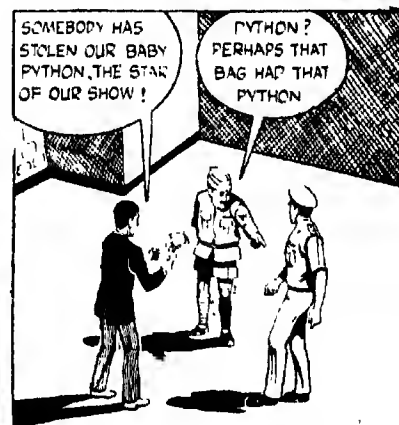
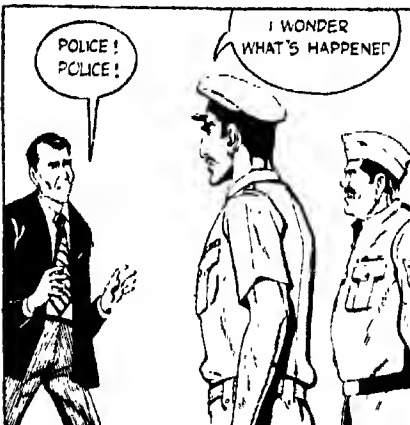
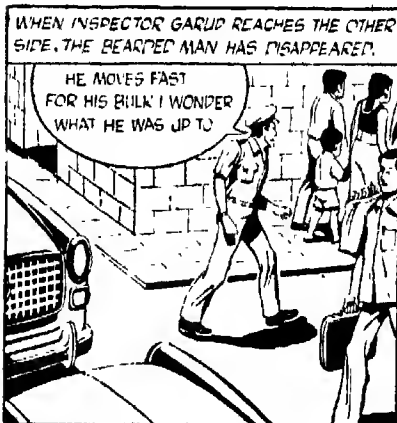
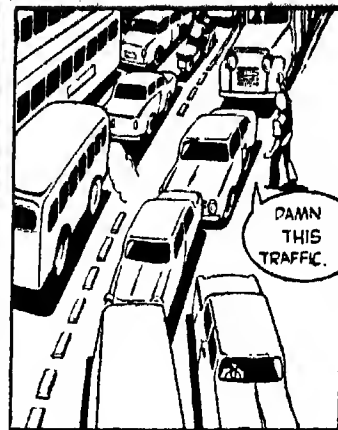
ple and police took the man over. It was only later that Sudhir learnt that he had handed over to the police a veteran kidnapper who was 'wanted' in several kidnapping cases.

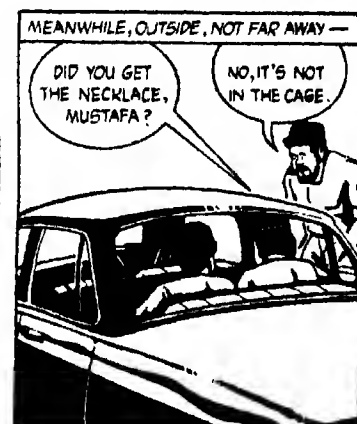
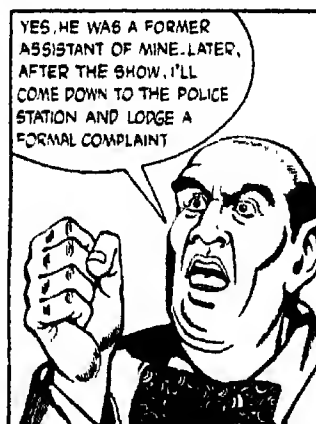
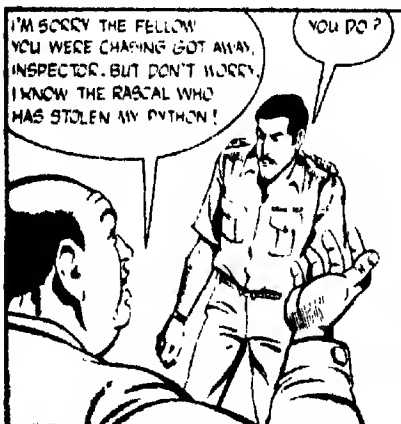
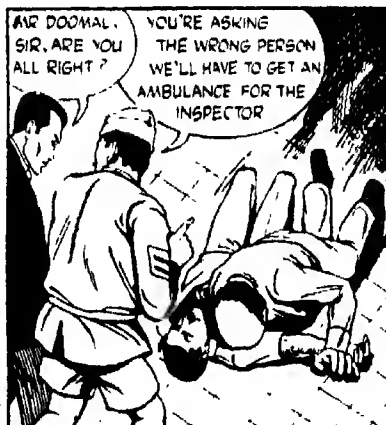
And so, year after year, by accident and sometimes by design, children keep alive the legend 'A stitch in times saves nine.' And as grown-ups continue to acknowledge and reward these acts of bravery year after year, let us remember, young or old, we too can save a life by prompt action and selfless thinking.

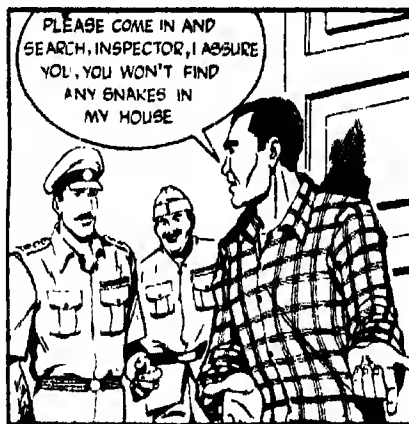
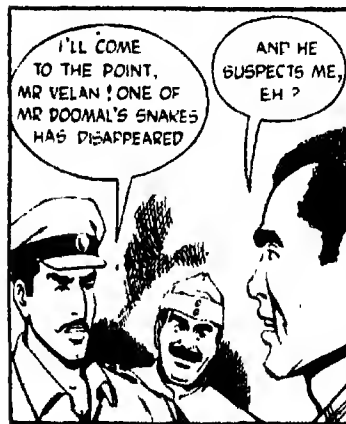
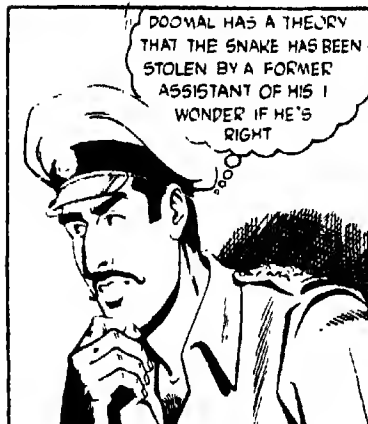
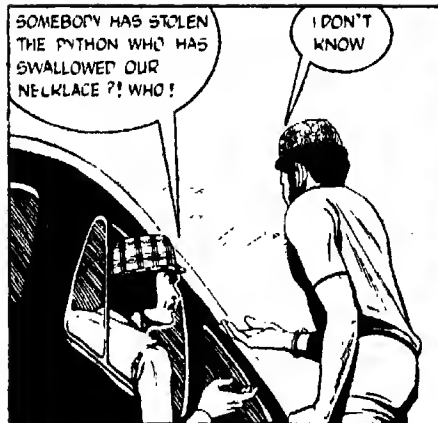
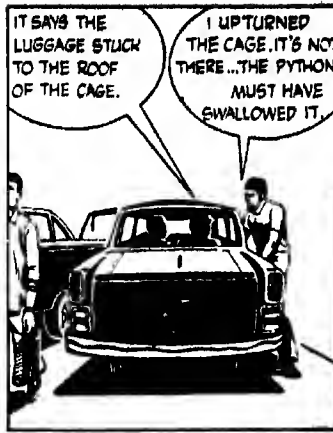
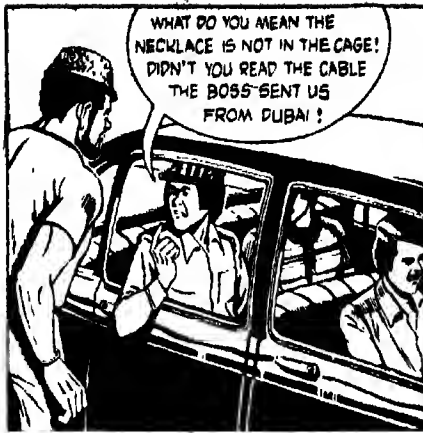
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# AN IMAGINATIVE TOY IS A BETTER BUY FOR A GIRL OR A BOY



NEW YEAR'S EVE in Delhi. That cold afternoon, "Children's World" had a date with a face and voice well-known in the Hindi film world. But, "Children's World" doesn't hobnob with film stars! What, then, could a film star offer "Children's World"? Plenty — I was to discover!

Like I said, the face and the voice were familiar, so when a wee monkey greeted me with a "Hello! How are you?" in Kamini Kaushal's voice, I wasn't terribly surprised. I looked up to see rosy monkey-arms and legs coiled round Kamini Kaushal, long tail dangling, while Kaminiji's right arm disappeared into a long monkey-shaped glove. It rested like a real monkey on her shoulder and moved occasionally to talk to the innumerable children who wandered in to see and buy Kamini Kaushal's toys, dolls, puppets, clowns, teddies, doggies, glove puppets, and what not!

Now, everybody, just about everybody, says they love children — especially if there's a distance of about 200 km between them! And they say it in the same tone that a child uses to say he "loves a cuddly cat or a 'shweetie' pie of a puppy". But when a person like Kaminiji says she loves children and has always been busy making things for them, you can believe it! For, only a person madly in love with children could

make such cuddly, adorable, lovable, huggable little creatures like Golliwogs, raggedy Ann dolls, teddies, clowns, etc . . . . . That, too, by finding time to make each individual creature herself when she is busy shooting for her films.

"This fellow," she said pointing to a red-haired boy blue, "I completed him when I was doing 'Pyaas'. That one there," she prattled on, pointing to another doll, "that one I was making on the sets of 'Santosh' three days ago — These skipping ropes I made day before yesterday when I realized I didn't have any left to sell in Delhi."

One would have thought that filmmaking is a busy enough occupation by itself, with its accompanying hassles. But, obviously, they do not bother Kaminiji, for, she says almost like Mary, of "Mary had a little lamb" —

"My basket goes with me wherever I go, and whenever I can snatch the time, I make a new creature." Creatures, she might call them, but she handles them as if they are little children and talks lovingly to them and of them. "Where did she get her ideas for such lovable things!" I wondered aloud.

"Oh, I've always been fond of arts and crafts," Kaminiji replied. "And I'd always been making little knick knacks even as a child. I made toys first for myself and later for my children." So around 1974, she thought, why not some



Psst! I say,  
Andy, is that a new  
doll, sitting behind  
me in a  
sari?



she's your  
Maker.



...nervaryd, how do you do?  
Teddy from Timbuck too.



If I do that, I'll squash my nose!



Oh, you naughty little greedy one,  
Asking for a bite when it's only half done!



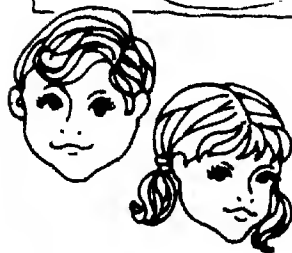
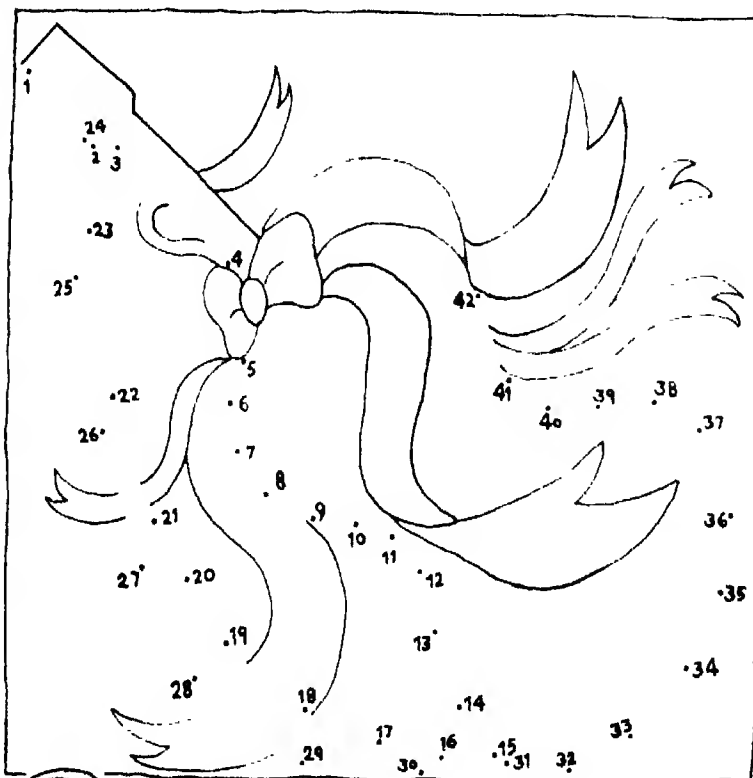
Now now, don't weep,  
Close your eyes and go to sleep,





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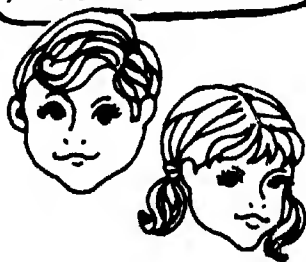
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lovely cuddly toys for other people's children as well! She has travelled extensively abroad and from all those ideas that she picked up there along with her own priceless ones, she started creating the most whoppingly cute dolls, glove puppets, and toys for her first exhibition in Bombay. Incidentally, her toys and dolls are not mass produced. Each individual item is not only designed by her, but even made by her and lovingly dressed by her. It is only now, she said, that she has some people working for her, helping to execute her ideas.

She has already held about six exhibitions in Bombay. There are barely one or two shops in Bombay where you can 'buy' Kaminiji's dolls and toys. In Delhi, if you are lucky, you might get an item or two at the Central Cottage Industries Emporium or at 'Petals', an exclusive boutique for children in Defence Colony. Otherwise, you have to wait for Kamini Kaushal to have another exhibition before you can buy one of her creations. The recent one in Delhi, on December 30 and 31, was her first in the capital and, judging from her sales, it was a tremendous success. Even then Kaminiji was not really satisfied.

"The tendency still is largely towards spending a lot of money on children's clothes. An imaginative toy, which actually helps in the development of the child's imagination, is considered a waste of money," she said indignantly. "Look at me," she continued, "I was never bothered with what my children wore. I didn't care if they roamed around in torn jeans. But the moment they asked for a toy, no matter how expensive it was, I bought it for them. For that would eventually help them develop their own minds." Expensive, even Kaminiji's toys may seem, but it's money well spent, one realises, and so

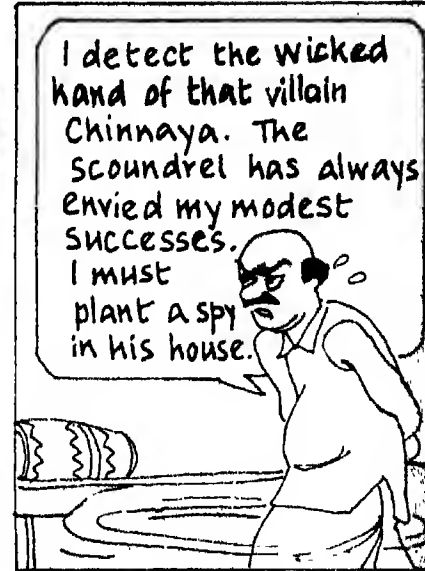
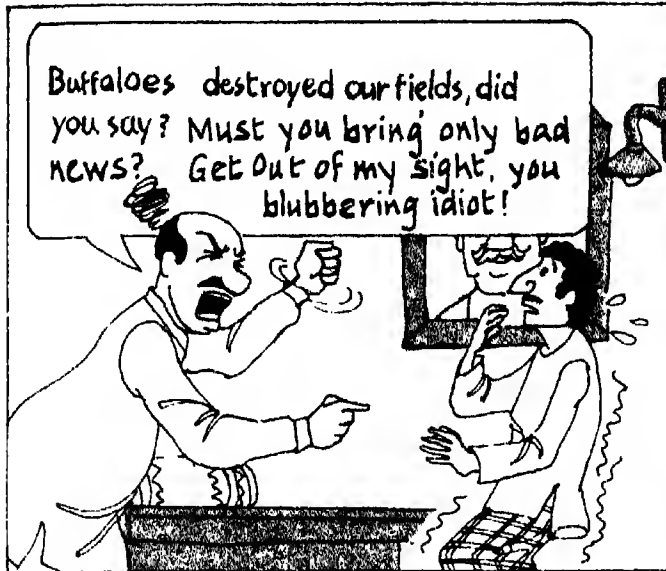
must the parents of scores of children who have bought Kaminiji's exclusive 'Playhouse' for five hundred rupees.

These 'Playhouses', big enough to accommodate two children of about 7-8, were all sold out by the time I went to the exhibition. This tent-like playhouse seems like great fun, where a child can play, eat, entertain, and even sleep in. I suppose, like a house within a house, or like a house out-of-the-house on a picnic. Her other creations are equally appealing, and not only children but even their parents had a tough time deciding which doll or toy they should take. Kaminiji, as saleswoman, was most helpful, personally attending to the customers. In her soft, balanced voice, she'd try to find out how old the child was and try to interest the child and its parents in an item that was suitable for that particular age-group. And even though the foggy old, older generation felt terribly flattered and were much impressed that a film star of 'their' times was actually trying to interest them in a particular item, their children, totally unaffected by the 'filmi' image, made a beeline only for the toys, and one could see how difficult it was for them to choose!

Kamini Kaushal's association with children doesn't, however, begin and end with the toys she makes for them. She has been chairman or rather chairwoman of the Children's Film Society of India, and was planning and compering Bombay Doordarshan's programme for children, right from the day Bombay TV was started and till quite recently. For this programme, she had created a puppet whom her son and his friend used to 'man'. Her son also lent his voice to the puppet.

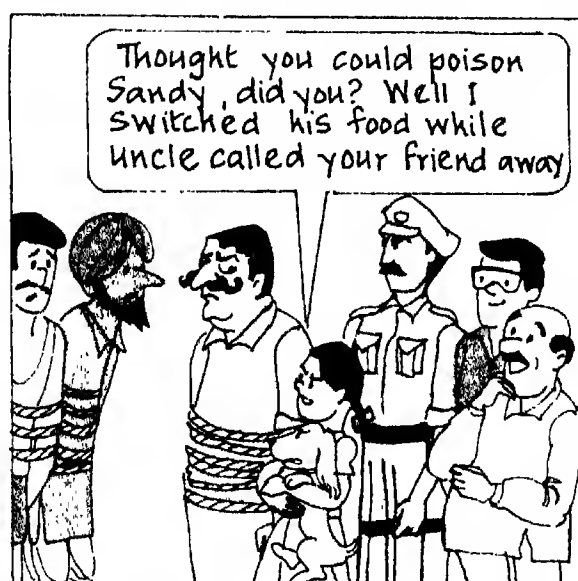
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# SHANTI AT A WEDDING • By Jeyanthi Manokaran



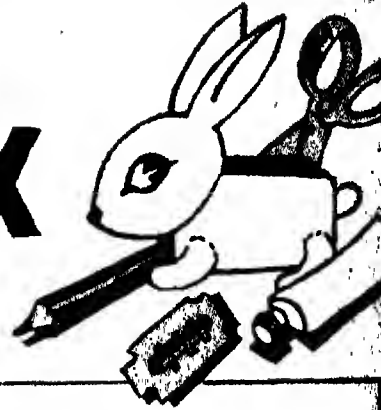






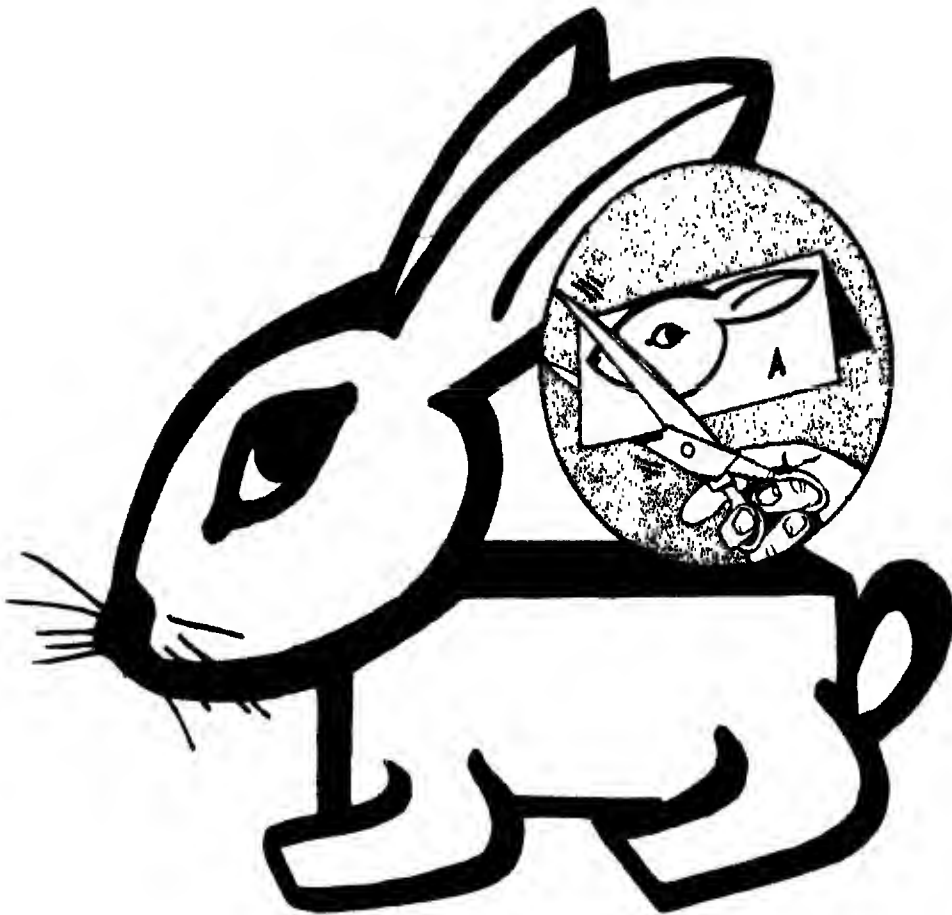


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OF PAPER. ASSEMBLE ALL THE PARTS TO MAKE A  
RABBIT. COLOUR IT DECORATIVELY.

**K.K.JESWANI**







NO one can unabashedly say, there is any dearth of children's theatre in Delhi. But that is not saying much. Most of this 'theatre' consists of a whole load of glittering second and third standard kids dancing in circles around a fairy queen, watched only (quite understandable!) by their parents. These plays are devoid of any plot, or character whatsoever, and generally reveal a teacher's interest in "Toddlers tall tales for bedtime" rather than anything else. Children are treated as puerile characters, incapable of thinking for themselves or having any idea of the society they live in. And is children's theatre patronized only by adults? I wondered, when I went to see "Besura Desh". There were hardly any children among the audience.

"Besura Desh" is the third play by the Music Theatre Workshop, and follows in the wake of the stormy "Kidstuf" and the lilting "Demons of Bara-tooti" (both of which were reviewed in these columns). The Music Theatre Workshop is, as its name implies, a theatre group for children of ages ranging from 10 to 17. It is directed by Mr. Param Vir and Mr. Feizal Alkazi, the former famous for his other musical

works, and the latter for his work in adult theatre. "Besura Desh", like its highly successful predecessors, was formed by discussion amongst the Workshop members, who chose and wrote out the theme and script of the play. The Workshop members also played the musical instruments for the play: Param Vir himself on the Piano and Tasa, Vikas Mehta on the percussion, Sanjeev Gupta on the Alto Xylophone and Bongo, Felix Padel on the Violin, Pranav Kapoor on the Base Xylophone, Deepak Deollikar on the Tabla, Zafar Al-Talib on the Clarinet, and Praveen Swami on the Recorders (a sort of flute) and Base drum.

Besura Desh is a country tucked away anywhere in the world. Literally a portrait of many countries of the world, it cries out against exploitation, decries the rape of Mother nature by unscrupulous people, and demands a just, equal life for all.

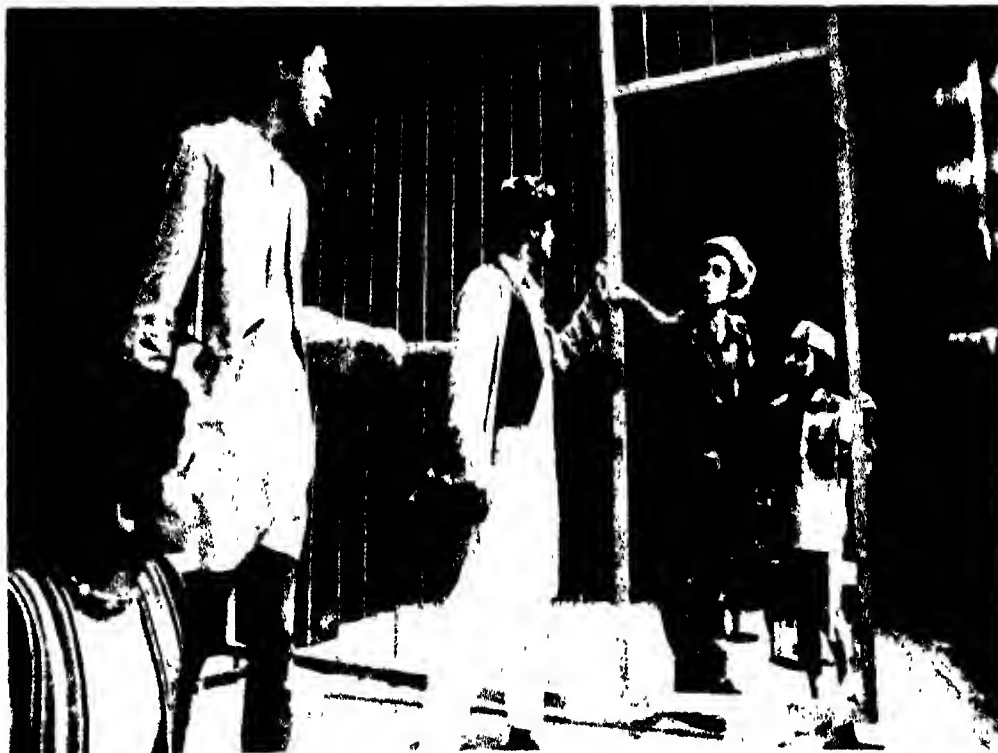
There are all of today's typical characters, corrupt from the top to the bottom. There is Kubuddhi, the typical megalomaniac general, thirsting for blood, and whose message is to bring death and destruction to the

earth. There is his religious counterpart, Durmati, surrounded by his ill-gotten wealth. Kubuddhi and Durmati's ideologies are married symbolically in the 7th song, as Kubuddhi's soldiers take the priests' saffron robes, and the priests take the soldiers' machine guns: a terrifying scene, a mix of two extreme evils: to loot and destroy, to kill and plunder, all in god's name. This is the Besura Desh ministers' ideology. When this happens, a typical Hitler is born. Hand-in-glove with them are the members of the Council of the Free, or the people who could buy their freedom. There is the Multinationalist wanting to build a nuclear armaments factory, which will involve destruction of forests. This is beneficial to the landlord, who wishes that the tribals on his land be subdued. Bhagwan Hashish goes into raptures, because he now can have wood for

his ashram. There is the 'Expert', representing the concentration of wealth in the hands of the elite few, planning the strategy for exploitation. Then there is Rocky, the social climber who, in his red suede shoes and bright pink outfit, is sent to exploit the tribals (to quote his song) and to make them "step out of the Stone Age and into the Jean Age" and tells them to "take an axe and come with me, we're going to cut a tree", topping this off with, "for the good times, cut the damn thing down". In the lower echelons are Khundak Khan the jailor; Gupt Ram the detective; Robot, the multinationalist's metal marvel; and Pahalwan, the landlord's muscle man. On top of all this corrupted cream, there is a little peach, the King, a harmless old man who is forced to sit and sleep on his throne, ignorant of all that goes on in his country.

**Below : Deepu attempts to pacify the Jailor, angry over Shekhu's request for food, while Mastana and the Vanvasi look on. On facing page, Deepu and Shekhu discuss the horrors of Besura Desh.**

*(Turn over for more pictures)*







Top, left, Mestano, the merry criminal, puts on the crown left behind by the King during his escape and imagines himself as the King, right, Giovanni Rinaldo, helped by the police, manipulates the lower classes like puppets, above, the Duke and the Detective are tricked once again before escape and the hero escapes after a chase.

(Photos by Paganini)

The play moves fast. Shekhu, an upper class rebel, and Deepu, a street performer, meet. With the aid of Bhola, Deepu's brother, they stage a play about a country much like Besura Desh, but insist that they are not talking about Besura Desh, yet they are arrested and sentenced to imprisonment.

In the jail, they meet with Adarsh, a middle class idealist imprisoned for his writings, and the dumb "Vanvasi" or tribal who is kept there for cutting a few branches of a tree in the landlord's land. There is an amusing dialogue between the Jailor and his pet, a petty criminal called Mastana. The play, at this point, takes a savage twist as the King is thrown into the jail. He reveals that though he is king by rank, he is only a puppet in the hands of Kubuddhi and Durmati. Deepu and the King sing the touching song "Azaadi" which tells of their yearning for freedom.

Deepu, Shekhu, the King, Adarsh, and the Vanvasi escape to the jungles where the tribals live. They rapidly establish rapport with the tribals and enlist their support in overthrowing the corrupt Besura Desh regime. At this

point Rocky, the social climber, comes on to persuade the tribals to make way to "civilization", but the tribals are dissuaded by an ex-city-dweller who now lives with them.

The play moves rapidly to the overthrow of the Besura Desh government. Peace and harmony are restored. Kubuddhi and Durmati try to escape, but are captured. During the revolt, the entire audience bursts into the song, "Hava dheere dheere bahar ja rahi hai", which Deepu and Shekhu had already taught them. The play ends on a note of warning, showing us the options left for the survival of man.

The Music Theatre Workshop indeed has done a commendable job of this play. The team met people from the Chipko Andolan, Kalpvriksh, and similar organizations before the theme was plotted out. The lyrics for the songs were written by an ex-Workshop member, Salil R. Singh.

The earth and mankind are on the brink of an ecological disaster. Trees are being ruthlessly felled, and pollution is widespread. Even if you have not seen "Besura Desh", here is a way to help spread its message.

Bean

*(continued from page 30)*

Her children and grandchildren are now Kamini's greatest source of inspiration. Anuradha, her 9-year-old daughter, lends her name to a very popular doll created by Kamini. He gave her youngest son a teddy, as big as himself, when he was small. It naturally became his favourite toy till he was seventeen and his very creative son gave him another teddy! Don't go to read about a 17-year-old guy

playing with teddies! Kamini's creatures are such a delight that they'd melt even a giant's heart. Were a wicked giant to get one of her creatures, he would probably preserve it till doomsday! As for kids, they couldn't ask for anything better than a doll so mobile, so fluid, with such speaking eyes and talking movements than the ones Kamini Kaushal makes.

Vaijayanti Tonpe

# INDIA JOINS SPACE CLUB!

*(India's first cosmonaut is right now undergoing rigorous training in the USSR space centres. He is likely to be launched into space sometime next year. This article—in two parts—describes step by step India's efforts to master space technology.)*

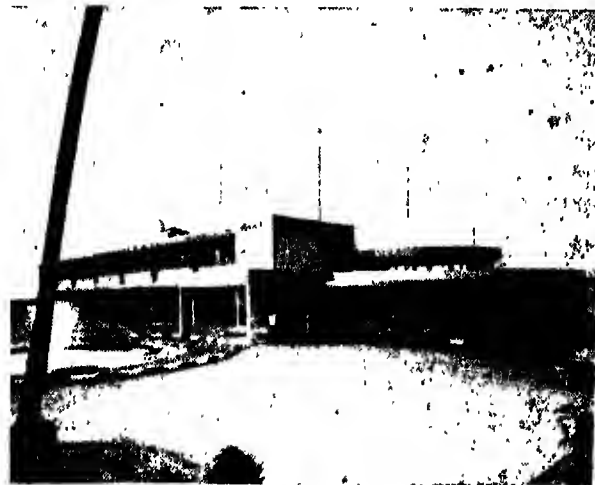
IT is a quarter of a century since the world zoomed into the Space Age, with the successful launching of the Russian satellite, Sputnik-I, on October 4, 1957. What was till then a figment of man's curiosity and imagination in popular science fiction had turned into reality. But to turn his imagination into reality, man did not possess a magic wand. It was the result of years of hard work and research. Similar efforts were being made in many other countries also. It was therefore little wonder that before four months had lapsed after this pioneering achievement, the USA launched its satellite, Explorer-I, on January 31, 1958.

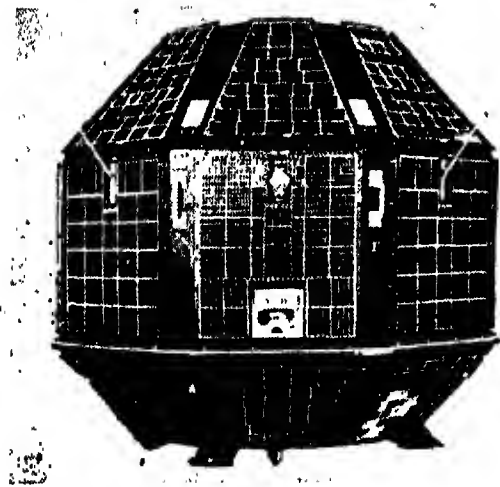
When the mystical space was thus being challenged by these countries, India had completed a decade of its Independence. It had all the manpower, but lacked the resources and technology needed for space research. Efforts were not wanting. When the Soviet Union launched Sputnik-I, India established an optical tracking station at the Naini Tal Observatory, in Uttar Pradesh, and watched the satellite. Within a year, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Bombay, embarked on experimental launchings of constant altitude plastic balloons to acquire data on conditions prevailing in high altitudes. In 1961, it was decided that the space research activities were to be coordinated and

conducted under the aegis of the Department of Atomic Energy. And so in 1962, the Indian National Committee for Space Research (INCOSPAR) was formed under the Department of Atomic Energy. It had as its Chairman a brilliant scientist, Dr. Vikram Sarabhai.

Dr. Sarabhai is known as the father of Indian space technology. He was a research scholar in the field of cosmic rays, a kind of radiation that comes from outer space. His efforts as Chairman of the INCOSPAR bore fruit when from 1963 India started launching small rockets known as sounding rockets, meant for studying the atmosphere, from a place called Thumba, near Trivandrum city. The Thumba Equatorial Rocket

*The Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station near Trivandrum, Kerala.*





*The 360 kg Aryabhata satellite.*

Launching Station (TERLS) was thus established.

Many Indian (Rohini-75, Rohini-100, Menaka-I, Menaka-II, etc.), Russian (M-100 etc.), American (Dual Hawk, Nike Apache, etc.), British (Skua, Petrel, etc.) and French (Dragon, Centaure, etc.) sounding rockets were launched from Thumba. Dr. Sarabhai's keen efforts convinced the world of India's sincerity and determination. As a result, many countries came forward to cooperate with India. In 1963, India secured UN sponsorship for TERLS, which accelerated space research in this country. Then, in 1969, INCOSPAR was reconstituted as a part of the Indian National Science Academy (INSA) and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) was formed.

Dr. Sarabhai dreamt of India having its own satellites. With this object in view, he persuaded the Government to set up a Satellite Systems Division (SSD) in 1970 at Thumba. But alas! Though his dream was realized just five years later, in the shape of Aryabhata, the first Indian satellite, he never lived to see it. He had passed away in 1971. Today at Thumba, sprawling over a vast

area lies the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) called after that dedicated scientist.

On June 1, 1972, the Indian Space Commission was formed and the Department of Space set up, with its headquarters at Bangalore. In the same year, the ISRO was brought under the Department of Space. Earlier, Dr. Sarabhai had begun talks with the USSR for assistance in India's space research programme, and was hopeful of Soviet cooperation. After his death, the talks were pursued further, which resulted in an agreement being signed between the USSR Academy of Sciences and the ISRO on May 10, 1972 at Moscow. The Soviet Union undertook to launch an Indian satellite with the help of a Soviet rocket and also to assist in fabricating the satellite. Indian scientists then set about building the satellite project (ISSP) at Peenya, near Bangalore. Subsystems of vital importance, like the solar panels for the generation of electricity, nickel-cadmium batteries for the storage of electricity, special tape recorders for the storage and transmission of data, and the spin-up systems to stabilise the satellite while in orbit, were provided by the USSR. The satellite cost India a huge 50 million rupees.

The 360 kg satellite, fabricated in 26 months, was named Aryabhata after a famous 5th century Indian astronomer and mathematician. Aryabhata was a polyhedron (a solid body with many bases or sides) in shape, having 26 faces. This blue and white satellite measured 116 cm in height. The satellite worked on a 45 watt power supply derived from the solar panels and the nickel-cadmium batteries.

Aryabhata was not meant for any vital practical utilisation. It was a purely technological satellite, just to prove that

India is capable of fabricating space-worthy satellites.

From India, Aryabhata was to be tracked by a ground station at Sriharikota, in Andhra Pradesh. At India's request, the USSR set up the Bears Lake ground station (near Moscow) for the same purpose. The satellite, while orbiting in space, could obey 35 commands sent from the ground stations.

Aryabhata was launched successfully from a Soviet cosmodrome on April 19, 1975, with the help of the Soviet Inter-cosmos carrier rocket. This heralded a new era of space research in India. Dr. Sarabhai's dream has been realized. Despite the cancellation of the experiments because of a mal-function in the power supply of the satellite, the mission proved that with proper technological knowledge, Indian scientists could achieve

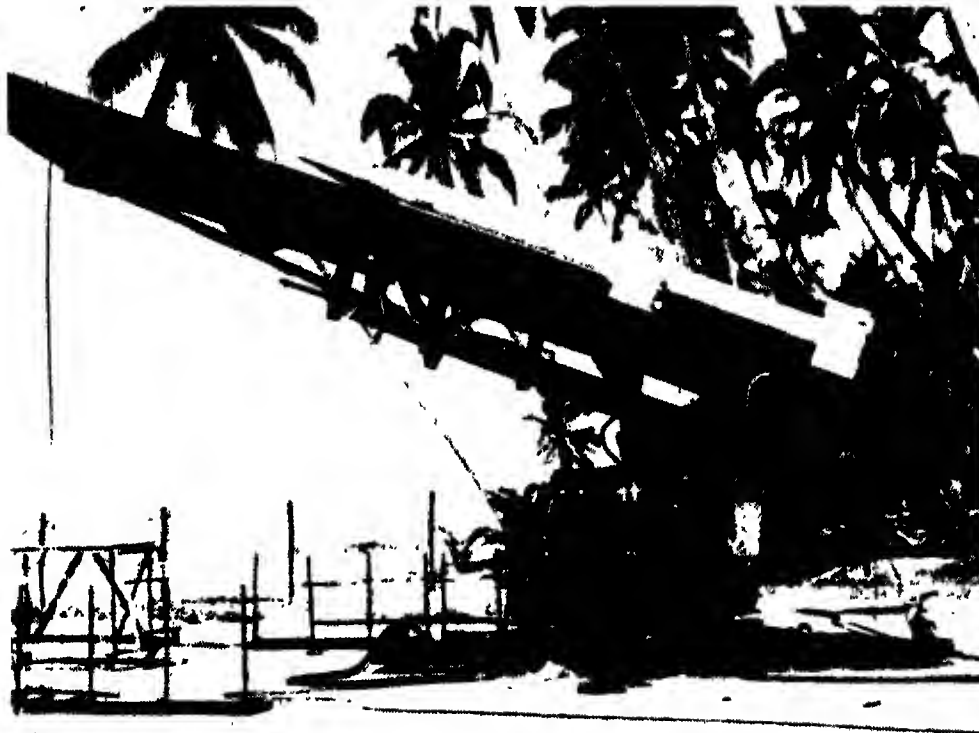
wonderful results.

India enthusiastically pursued its space plans, with the sole objective of exploiting the potential of its satellites for the country's development. Just three days after the successful launching of Aryabhata, a second agreement was signed between the USSR Academy of Sciences and the ISRO. It was responsible for the second Indian satellite, Bhaskara.

Named after a leading 6th century Indian astronomer, Bhaskara was intended for active practical utilisation. It was an Earth Observation Satellite (SEO), meant for conducting Earth-observation experiments and surveying the natural resources of India. For this, remote-sensing technology was adopted by the Indian scientists.

Remote-sensing is a technique for

*A rocket being mounted at Thumba.*





detecting the characteristics of an object or a phenomenon, without actually being in contact with it. Our eye is a simple remote-sensing instrument. Every physical object in this universe emits different kinds of radiations. An electromagnetic spectrum is an arrangement of these radiations, according to their wavelengths. A small portion of the electromagnetic spectrum is known as the visible range. Radiations of certain wavelengths comprising this visible range are detected by our eyes and enable us to see the object around us. And they are incapable of detecting the radiations falling outside this visible range. These can be detected only by instruments known as sensors, developed by the modern technology of remote-sensing. These sensors reveal what the eye cannot detect and supply valuable information to the scientists.

If we look around from our rooftops, we can see a small part of our city around us. But if we climb up a tower, a much larger portion of our city can be seen. It is, therefore, obvious that from an aeroplane we may not only be able to see our city but many adjoining areas also. Similarly, as satellites move at higher altitudes than aircrafts and balloons, they can survey a much wider area of the ground. So the remote-sensing operations carried out through them provide the scientists with such information which cannot be obtained from any other source.

Bhaskara had on board, as its primary payload, two TV cameras and three microwave radiometers. One of the cameras, like the ordinary TV camera, worked in the visible range, while the other worked in the infrared range. India's scientists expected to get valuable scientific information from the pictures

taken by these cameras. The radiometers were also meant for similar remote-sensing operations.

Bhaskara, fabricated by the Peenya team of scientists at a cost of Rs. 6.5 crores was like Aryabhata a 25-faced polyhedron. It weighed 444 kg, with a height of 156 cm and a diameter of 159 cm. The system for power supply was the same as in Aryabhata. For this satellite, too, the USSR provided the important sub-systems. A much more sophisticated satellite than Aryabhata, Bhaskara could obey 200 commands. The ground stations at Sriharikota, Ahmedabad, and the Bears Lake were to track the satellite while it moved in orbit.

On June 7, 1979, an Intercosmos rocket successfully thrust Bhaskara into orbit, from a Soviet cosmodrome. Though the microwave radiometers installed in the satellite transmitted valuable data to the ground stations, the TV cameras failed to obey the commands. But the scientists persisted in their efforts. On May 16, 1980, one of the cameras responded and hundreds of pictures were obtained by the ground stations. On November 20, 1981, a similar satellite, Bhaskara-II (SEO-II), an improved version of Bhaskara, was launched by an intercosmos rocket from the Soviet Union, which fulfilled Bhaskara's incomplete mission.

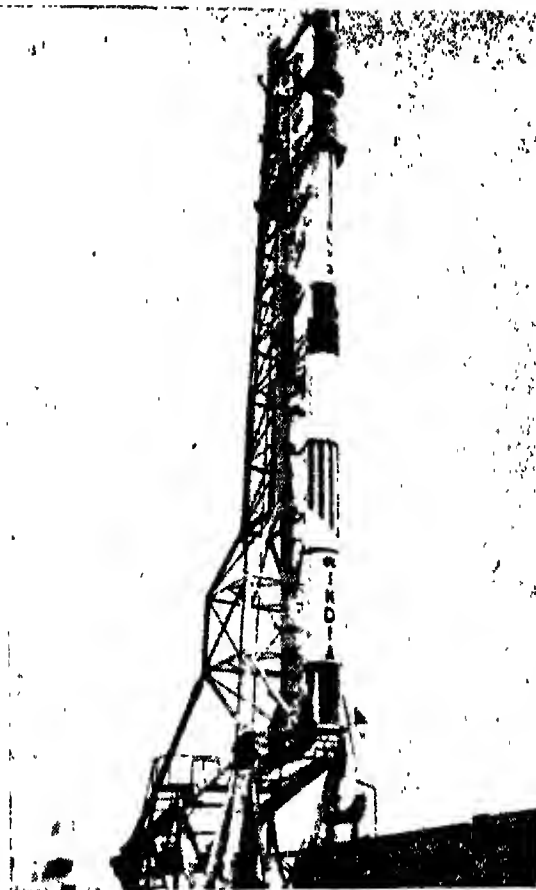
Although Aryabhata and Bhaskara had been fabricated in India, they were launched by Soviet rockets from Soviet soil. Indian scientists realised that unless and until they developed the technology of launching their own satellites, they could not hope to execute their space plans independently. So, even when Bhaskara was being built, work was simultaneously progressing on

## India's first Satellite Launch Vehicle, SLV-3.

Designed and produced at VSSC, SLV-3 measures 22.6 metres in length and has a take-off weight of 17 tonnes. It is a pencil shaped rocket of 1 metre diameter, and is capable of launching a 40 kg satellite in a low earth orbit. Divided into four stages, SLV-3 carries the satellite to be launched in its fourth stage. The satellite is covered with a heat shield to protect it from being damaged during the fiery launch. In case of any mal-function in the vehicle, it can be destroyed by a ground operated destruct system, to terminate the flight. The vehicle is powered by solid fuel made in India.

An experimental flight of SLV-3 on August 10, 1979 failed. But it did not dampen the spirits of our scientists. Another flight of the vehicle was planned. This time, instead of a simple payload in the fourth stage, a Rohini satellite fabricated by the ISRO Satellite Centre at Bangalore was used. This 35 kg satellite was provided with solar panels built in India which supplied power to the satellite. The satellite's mission was not application oriented. It was a simple technological satellite which was to provide the ground stations with data on SLV-3's performance during the 12-minute launch phase. Its launching was also thought to be an ideal opportunity to test the performance of the ground stations. Tracking of the satellite was to be done by the ground stations at Sriharikota, Car Nicobar, Thumba, and Ahmedabad. A mobile tracking station was also to participate in the tracking of the satellite from the Fiji main island.

On July 18, 1980, the SLV-3 was suc-



*The SLV-3 rocket.*

cessfully fired from the Sriharikota Range (SHAR), in Andhra Pradesh. It thrust into orbit the 35 kg Rohini satellite. It was indeed a glorious achievement for India. The USSR, USA, France, Japan, and China were till then the only nations capable of launching their own satellites. India was proud to join the Space Club! With this latest success, India had also acquired the technology of developing Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles (IRBM), which was a rare achievement. Though to this day, there has been no place for IRBMs in the Indian space plans. India uses its space achievements only for peaceful purposes.

**Subhendu Mukherjee**

*(To be concluded)*

# ALL ABOUT ASIAD I TO VIII

## **STORY OF THE ASIAN GAMES**

**By Narottam Puri**

**National Book Trust, New Delhi**

**Rs 6**

**O**UR readers will remember the series—History of the Asian Games—that appeared on these pages in the past several issues. This book goes over much the same ground.

The author correctly pays tribute to Prof. G. D. Sondhi, who revived the idea of an Asian Games on the pattern of the pre-World War II Far Eastern Games and similar events.

This book could be particularly useful for children, especially those who are interested in athletics and team sports, because it recalls the glorious achievements of the pioneering Indian athletes, like Lavy Pinto, Milkha Singh, and Sriram Singh. They became heroes for all Indians and worthy of emulation by every young athlete.

The best that India has ever done is to come second in the tally of medals (in the First Asiad), and ever since then it has been a steady fourth or fifth. China, a recent entry in the Asian Games arena, has gone far ahead of us. Japan has always been the strongest sporting nation in Asia, but she may not be able to hold this position for long.

The photographs that illustrate this history are well chosen and quite inspiring. Through them we can follow the rising sophistication

in equipment and style, turf yielding place to cinder and this in turn to the tartan of today. These synthetic surfaces are as near-perfect as one can get through the application of modern scientific discoveries.

Science also comes to the aid of the athlete in recording his achievements more accurately and by photographic and other equipment registering his faults in style and movement. It also tells him the capacity of his own body and how far he can go without causing serious injury to himself. Thus, by an error-free style and greater strength, athletic performances improve dramatically.

Though we are justifiably proud of having held the First Asian Games and thus begun a tradition which is now well-established, we cannot get carried away and go so far as the author, to claim that "these Games are second only to the Olympics from the viewpoint of participation and discipline." The European Games have a winter counterpart which we do not, and for another, the Pan American Games involve two continents and a degree of skill which we cannot hope to match.

The involvement of more children in the national sports movement, building more sports facilities and putting to good use whatever is available are necessary to make this healthy activity more popular in India. The author has not touched on any of these issues, but confined himself to mere narration. But he writes simply and well, and this book will be enjoyed by all senior school students.

**THE WISE AND THE WILY**  
**Animal Stories of the East**  
**By Kala Thairani**  
**NBT, New Delhi, Rs 2.50**

**R**ESEMBLING Russian books on the same theme and subject, this collection of six brief tales involves clever animals who outwit their stronger cousins and also, in the process, keep them from doing any harm to the weaker residents of the forest world.

To personalise certain animals and make them behave much as humans would have in the same circumstances is the theme of folk tales all over the world. The Panchatantra tales of India are perhaps the best examples of this form of narration.

In doing so, a truth is sought to be established and a moral taught. And, invariably, it is the jackal, described as the 'cunning' jackal, or the 'clever' hare which gets the pride of place.

'Sivalu and the Elephant' involves a jackal who wants to enjoy an undisturbed meal and puts off the scent a lion, a tiger, and a leopard in quick succession. A lion is also the fool in the other story entitled 'On His Majesty's Service'.

These tales from India and Sri Lanka thus, in a way, poke fun at the Lord of the Forest and his Princes who are deceived by flattery and enticed to their doom by greed or pride (as also in the story 'Why is the Rabbit Called Wise').

That one clever fellow or two can be tricked by another who is cleverer is illustrated in the story 'Company for the Feast', where a hare gets the better of a wolf and a fox. In Burma and Tibet, the rabbit or the hare is considered the wisest of all animals.

Pulak Biswas could possibly be nearing a personal landmark in illustrating children's books and he is particularly strong when

dealing with tongue-in-cheek stories. But whether in the interest of economy or style, leaving blank white spaces over large areas of the pages does not present a very attractive look.

There is also a point to be made for thicker and meatier books, because these slim volumes do not either engage the attention of children for very long nor do they preserve very well. Perhaps the N.B.T. could issue several stories in tandem instead of relying on these single-shot ventures.

**Balachandran**

**FORM IV**

**Statement about ownership & other particulars about  
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I, K. Ramakrishnan, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief

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(Sd.) K. Ramakrishnan  
 Publisher



**O**F the various kinds of herons that are known, the common herons are a widely distributed species throughout Southern Europe, North Africa, China, and Japan. In India, they are found wherever there is water.

They are typical birds, with long legs and upright carriage, fine, dark-ringed eyes with bright yellow irises and large bright black pupils. They have pointed, flesh-coloured dagger-like bills. Consequently, herons are not difficult birds to identify and every bird-lover knows them by sight though, as a matter of fact, they are by no means evenly distributed.

They frequent the banks of rivers and streams, lakes and ponds, and spend much time standing still in shallow water, on the lookout for prey. Their method of capturing fish reveals how much better they are at it, than our fisher-folk. They fish by thrusting their dagger-like beaks down when they see fish, and always succeed. Their food consists chiefly of fish, frogs, and worms, but young water fowls, mice, molluscs, and insects are also eaten.

Throughout the greater part of the year, herons are solitary in habits. Family life starts early in the year — their pairing season — when they congregate in large numbers. They usually nest in almost inaccessible spots at the top of tall trees. To watch them in their nests is far from easy. Last year, however, I found a nest so placed that it could be overlooked from a hidey-hole I had built, and was able to watch the birds from the laying of the first egg to the departure of the young, a period of approximately three months.

These colonists, however, like old die hards, still rigidly cling to the tradition of building their nests on a few chosen trees near water. Around village Burari, near Delhi, is one such heron colony.

Birds began to frequent the heronry towards the end of January, when small groups would sit out on the marsh adjacent to the stately trees. From time to time they inspected the nests, and when I entered the heronry in February, many birds were present, perched on their nests and obviously in possession. If no birds were evident, pallets below the trees and branches were good indication which nests of previous years had been taken over by pairs of birds. The amount of nest-building done varied considerably. In the large, well established nests — great saucers of sticks, some two or three feet in diameter — practically no additions were made at this stage. The smaller nests of only one or two years' standing were added to and made into safe receptacles for eggs. The herons arriving last found all existing nests occupied and constructed new ones, which looked ridiculously small for such large birds.

Generally, the eggs are laid at the end of February. Last year, laying at this heronry was at its peak in the third week of March. In fact, although ten occupied nests were examined regularly, the first eggs were not found until the middle of March.

When I was in the hidey-hole, I observed three crows in the vicinity of one heron's nest. Later, one of them entered the nest in the absence of its owner and destroyed an egg. The robber hopped away and the heron, on returning home, took the empty blue shell and dropped it over the side of the nest and then brooded the remainder. Apparently, the heron was not unduly disturbed by the loss and finally reared four young ones.

In the nest on which all subsequent observations were concentrated, five eggs were laid during the second half of March, at two or three-day intervals. Since they hatched at approximately the same intervals, incubation must have begun with the laying of the first egg. Incubation was carried out by both birds, but the female sat for longer periods than the male.

Change-over was a most delicate operation, involving intense display. Often, if the male was to take his turn, he first carefully selected a twig, broken off from a dead branch, and presented it to the sitting female, who then added it to the nest. The male then sat on the eggs till the female returned. Finally, after approximately 26 days' incubation, the first egg hatched and a dark-grey chick, with legs having a distinct greenish tint and a head with a halo of thin light grey feathers, appeared.

Rearing the chicks involved special feeding exercises for the heron. Food had to be collected, such as fish, frogs, crabs, and aquatic insects, and fed to the chicks by regurgitation. The first feed was observed when only two chicks were hatched.

Regurgitations were made by the male and in each case a small black mass was produced consisting of relatively small morsels, probably crabs. The two chicks showed little interest and most of the food was eaten by the parent. Regurgitation completed, there followed a long period of bill cleaning while the bird sat on the unhatched eggs.

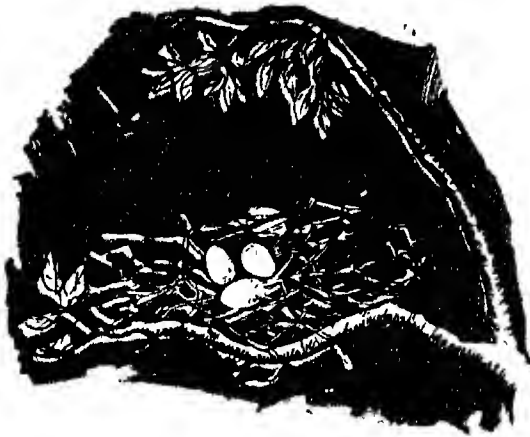
The chicks' lack of interest in food was short-lived; the day following the hatching of the last chick, they began eating food most greedily.

Descriptions of how a heron feeds its chicks always stress that the chick grabs its parent's beak with its own so as to stimulate it to regurgitate. This, obviously, cannot occur in the earliest stages and was not observed until the eldest chick was some eighteen days old; it then grasped the beak of the female immediately after she arrived, and drew it down to nest level. At this stage the food was regurgitated into the open mouth of the clamouring chick.

In the earlier stages the parent was able to resist any active pulling by the chicks. In the last recorded feed, when the chicks were seven weeks old, the young were roughly the same size as the male, and stimulation produced a situation comparable to a

*Standing still on one leg, the heron is <sup>and calm</sup> at peace*





*The nest of a heron is usually a crude platform of sticks high in the tree.*

wrestling match. Also, in these later stages, the nature of the regurgitated material was considerably changed. For, large objects, such as a foot-long eel, were thrown up and swallowed whole by one chick! Regurgitated feeding was far frequent now.

The chicks remain in the nest for approximately eight weeks. The first indications of attempts to leave are when the young birds begin to climb the branches adjacent to the nest and then make short flights around the heronry. After the young have finally left their breeding-places, their parents leave them entirely to support themselves. They move alone and are completely independent from the time they leave the vicinity of the heronry—their breeding place.

Long ago, in Britain, herons were protected by law for the benefit of the knights and nobles, who hunted them with trained falcons. The captured birds were later served at banquets. The appearance of cooked heron at the table was a signal to the knights to begin a round of boasting about their adventures and the skill of their favourite falcons.

During the reign of James I, a law was passed making it an offence for anybody to fire a gun within 600 yards of a heronry.

Although found in most parts of the

world, herons are particularly special to North Americans. The well-known American author, Henry Thoreau, even suggested making them US citizens! Though such status was never officially granted, herons appeared on a 1947 United States postage stamp—the first bird ever to be so honoured solely because of its distinctive appearance.

In flight, a heron is easily distinguished from other birds by its characteristic body position—its neck is held in an S-shape and its legs float straight out behind, like streamers in the wind.

Have you ever heard of a "heron orphanage"? There is one in Japan. About 30 miles northwest of Tokyo, there is a small village called Noda where, tall, slender trees stand amongst the houses. The village, surrounded by green rice-fields and little copses, is familiar to Japanese bird-lovers as the summer home of the white herons.

It was sometime during the 18th century that the first herons came to Noda; more came in later years; now they number about 16,000 during an average summer. They do not all arrive at the same time. Early in April, the first heron flies in from the south—a 'scout' carrying out a survey to see if everything is the same as in the year before. Next comes an advance party of about a hundred birds; finally, the large flocks arrive.

Apparently, the villagers were very kind to the winged visitors, which probably accounts for their return year after year. The children, in particular, were eager to take care of them, and this tradition still continues.

A few years ago, a giant typhoon killed many of the herons, and as a result many of the young ones were orphaned. A special 'heron orphanage' was built at the local school where the children looked after these waifs. The orphanage is still in regular use,

*(Turn to page 64)*

**"There is only one magic  
which can remove  
poverty—and that is hard  
work helped by a clear  
sense of purpose and  
discipline."**

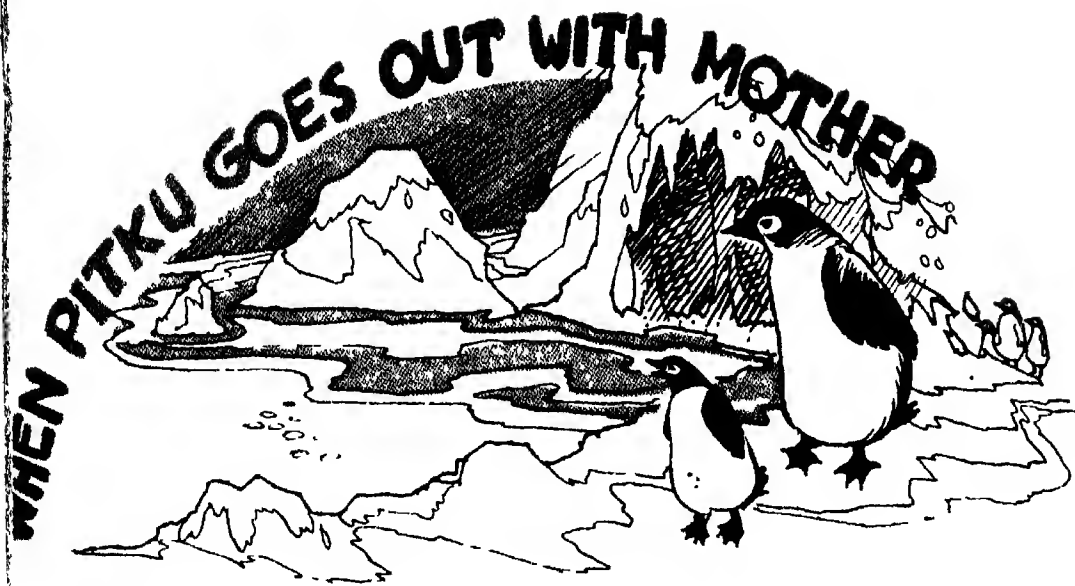
**—Indira Gandhi**

## **Satyameva Jayate—Shramaeva Jayate**



davp 82/506





**P**ITKU, a baby penguin, was walking by the side of his mother. It was summer time in Antarctica, the land of eternal ice and snow. The sky was immensely blue. It was a pleasant morning. Pitku was in great spirits. Today his mother was giving him a delicious treat of the krill, the tiny fish that swarm the coastal waters of Antarctica.

"We'll be hunting the krill under the sheet of ice. Remember, you're coming here for the first time. So be careful. And no pranks!" his mother warned him.

"I won't play any mischief," Pitku bowed his head to reassure her, "it's a promise!"

Hundreds of Adelie penguin families had started towards the shore. As usual, they were smartly dressed in black and white. Pitku saw his uncles, aunts, and cousins walking in groups. He was very proud of his family. "All of them are so affectionate, so loving!" Pitku said to himself.

"What're you muttering?" his mother asked.

"Oh, it's nothing," Pitku smiled happily.

They continued to walk, Pitku asking her a hundred and one questions. On the way, he caught sight of some strange animals, tied to posts buried deep in the snow. At the sight of the penguins, they at once fell silent. They crawled as near to the penguins as their chains would permit. But for their twitching tails, they were still. With bated breath, they glanced 'lovingly' at the penguins.

"Who're they?" Pitku asked his mother.

"They're Siberian huskies. Men have brought them here," his mother answered.

One of the dogs addressed Pitku. "Hello, darling! Going out fishing with your mother?"

"Yes, she is treating me to krill."

"Come, darling, come nearer. Shake hands with your old uncle," the dog said in a coaxing tone and put out one of his paws.

Unsuspecting, Pitku was about to move forward, when his mother held him back. "What're you doing?"

"I was going to shake hands with uncle and say 'Hello'."

"Fool! He would have torn you to pieces and eaten you up!" She cast an angry glance at the huskies, but was too dignified to pick a quarrel with them.

The Adelie penguins were now almost near the shore. Suddenly, there was a dreadful noise. A distant rumbling and crackling like thunder. It was repeated again and again. Pitku moved closer to his mother and asked her in a hushed voice, "What was that noise, mother?"

"Nothing to worry about," his mother assured him. "Just the ice cracking."

Indeed it was. With the warmth of the summer, the ice had begun to thaw. Huge cracks developed in the shore ice. The pack ice started breaking. Giant icebergs were breaking away from the land mass of ice that covered Antarctica. As they broke away, they made a rumbling, crackling noise.

The sea was crowded with ice of all shapes and sizes. Pitku was watching an iceberg near the shore. It dazzled in the sun. Its translucent white had patterns of blue shades, scattered all over. Its sides were polished incredibly smooth by the waves. Every time they broke against its sides, snow white foam shot high up in the air.

"Mother, please, let me take a shower of foam," Pitku begged. He swam to the iceberg, crawled over it, and stood up. Every now and then he would receive a shower of foam. Pitku was immensely delighted.

"Mother, why don't you join me? It's great fun," Pitku invited her.

His mother smiled and joined him in the 'foam shower'.

"Ah, there! What're you both doing?" It was father penguin calling out. "Hurry up. Others are already hunting the krill. Come on."

Pitku and his mother swam through the water and joined him. They started

towards where all the other penguins had gone. Soon they reached the place. The other penguins were already beneath the sheet of ice, hunting the krill.

Pitku dived into the water along with his mother and father. Under the ice, the sea bed was beautiful. There was a dim glow all around. The water was crystal clear. There were shoals of fish. Tiny krill crowded together as they floated. The ice-sheet above was shining and somewhat transparent. Below that, the ice-cold water was limpidly green. Pitku gazed at the tiny blue starfish, then turned his attention to some larger ones, orange in colour, with tentacles. They moved gently on the uneven surface of the sea bed. The penguins swam with amazing speed, hunting the krill.

'Mother is an expert acrobat. Let me try that leap,' Pitku told himself.



He was about to leap, when a great blacktopped head with white underjaw reared from the water. A row of saw-edged teeth frightened the life out of a baby seal, who took to his tail and disappeared. Pitku's mother moved to his side and thrust him on an ice floe nearby. Within seconds, the whole penguin family was on the shore.

"What was it, mother?" asked Pitku.

"It was a killer whale, our deadly enemy. Never go anywhere near him," his mother warned him.

"I thought it was a dolphin."

"Looks somewhat like him. But never forget, that belly of his can take in a dozen seals at a time! Maybe a dozen penguins also!"

"Killer whales? Oh, they are formidable hunters," father penguin joined the two. "They surround and destroy whole herds of walruses. They attack other whales and tear the tongues out of their jaws!"

"Ah, they must be very cruel to do that," Pitku sighed.

Next moment he forgot all about the killer whales. He saw baby seals playing

hide-and-seek through the 'breathing holes' gnawed in the ice. They would leap on the ice from water, flipper themselves across the ice, and with a flick of their tails, disappear through the 'breathing holes' under the sheet of ice. Pitku was greatly enjoying their game.

Some of the seals would just crawl up the smooth ice and slide down again in water. Others seemed too lazy. They would just lie on the ice, turn their heads towards the penguins, as if to study them for a while, then give a wide yawn and go back to sleep.

Pitku thought he would join them in their game of hide-and-seek. He shouted at a baby seal, "Ah friend, can I join you in your game?"

"Ask your mother." It was father penguin who spoke.

"Pitku, we're going to the shore to welcome some guests. So better hurry up," said his mother.

Pitku was disappointed. Yet he turned to the seals and said, "Let's make it some other time. You see, we're busy today."

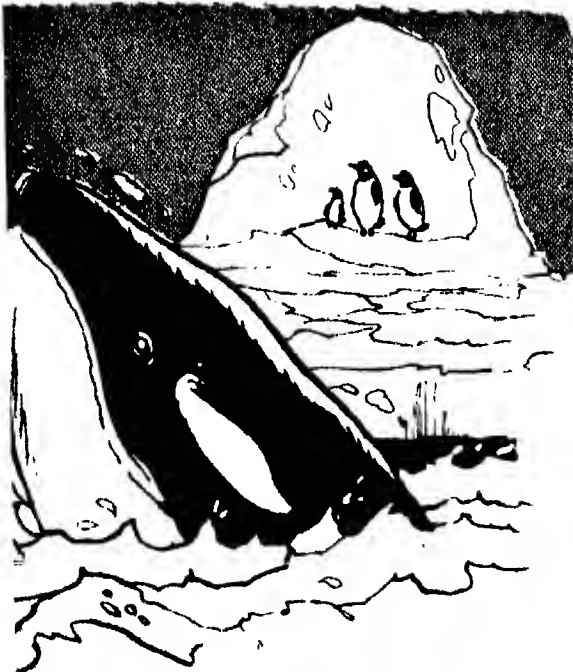
"Bye! See you again," said a baby seal, who lowered himself in a 'breathing hole' and disappeared.

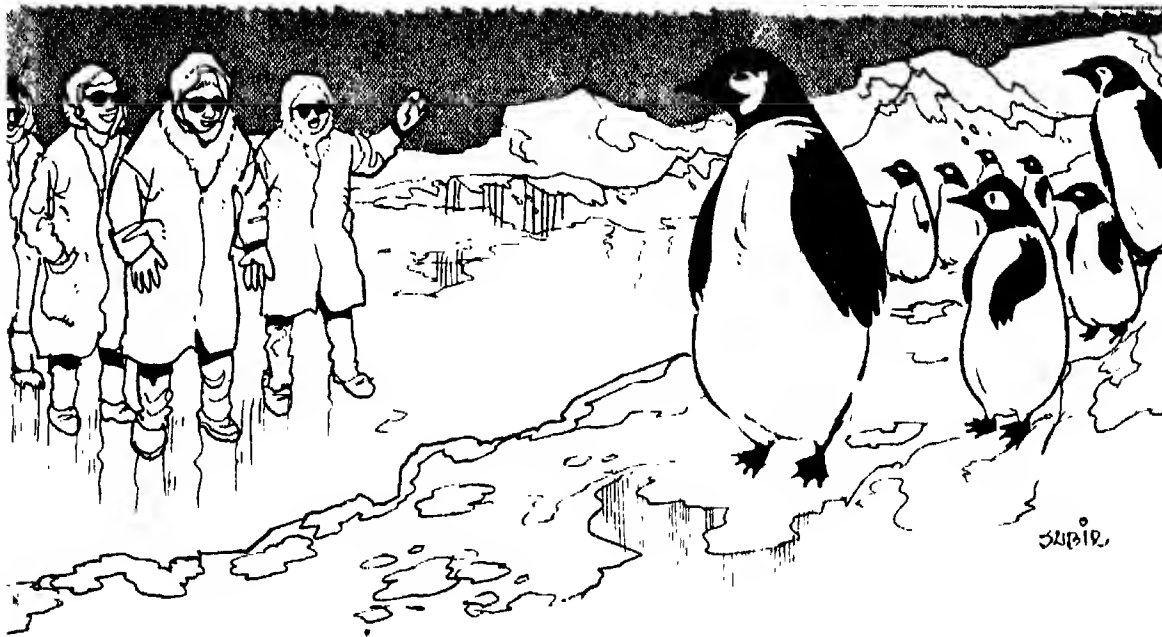
The Adelie penguins continued their walk. They looked well-bred and dignified. They walked on and on, swaying from one foot to another. When they came across some furrows in the ice made by sledges and snow-scooters, they preferred to crawl on their bellies, helping themselves along with the tips of their wings.

"Mother, when we crawl, don't you think we look more like seals or tortoise?" Pitku asked his mother.

"We look like penguins, whether we crawl or walk," his mother said with great dignity.

Pitku knew it was time to keep quiet! The penguins walked for some more





time. Soon they were on the shore. A few men were standing on the ice. The penguins had by then formed a sort of procession, led by two noble Emperor penguins. The procession halted at a respectable distance from the men. The fat, old Emperor penguin waddled closer to the men.

"Welcome, brothers, to this land of ice and penguins," the Emperor said, as he graciously bowed again and again, before the men. He made a welcome speech, but it seemed the men could not follow his language.

"Why don't they say something?" Pitku asked his mother.

"Probably they do not understand our language," the mother said.

Another Emperor penguin came forward, pushing aside the first one. "Let me do the job, I'll write the welcome on ice. Probably they will then understand." He drew on the ice, with his bill, as large a circle as the joints of his neck would allow him. Then he looked up at the men, hoping that they had understood his writing.

The men stood surprised for some moments. But when they looked into the eyes of the penguins, they under-

stood the message. One of the men came forward, bowed to the Emperor penguin and said, "Friends, thank you very much for your welcome."

Strange enough, the penguins, even Pitku, understood what he said. He was so happy that he began to dance. But the smooth ice played a trick. Pitku slipped and fell flat on his belly. Everybody had a hearty laugh. Raising himself from the ice, Pitku also laughed heartily.

It was evening. The sky hung low over the blindingly white ice. It was superbly beautiful. It had every colour except black. Gold, yellow, red, crimson, orange, green, blue, and their innumerable shades splashed the sky with great abandon.

"Mother, the sky is singing. Can you hear?" Pitku asked his mother.

She looked at him very lovingly for a moment, then said gently, "Child, the whole of Antarctica sings a song of happiness. One must have the ears to hear it!"

Pitku did not understand what she said. He was too happy, peaceful, and contented to put any more questions to her!

**Malati Deshpande**

**R**AIL history was made two years ago — in February 1981, as the renowned French TGV high speed train attained the world record speed of 380 km/h on the new 426 km Paris-Lyon line. Six months later, on September 27, 1981, the TGV entered commercial service at 260 km/h on the same line which was partly opened.

The TGV is now the world leader in high speed trains, as the 260 km/h represents an increase of nearly 25 percent on the hitherto world record of 210 km/h achieved since 1965 on Japan's Shinkansen, between Tokyo and Osaka, and marks the culmination of more than 25 years of trial and research.

More recently, Britain's "aircraft of the iron road", the advanced passenger train (APT) started 'flying' from Glasgow to London at 201 km/h. But France has beaten them all.

Nothing like it has been attempted before. Italian Railways, for instance, have not been able to exploit commercially the partly finished line designed for 300 km/h between Rome and Florence. The same is true of West Germany, where new lines are advancing at a rather slow pace. It is the same story with the North-East Corridor of the USA.

Even in Japan, new lines in Northern Shinkansen are designed for 260 km/h, but the Series 200 stock provided for these lines are geared for a maximum of 210 km/h for various technical reasons. On older routes designed for 160 km/h, attempts to break through the 200 km/h barrier have so far ended in failure. Among the three countries with railway systems on which swifter travel has become the order of the day, the TGV project has thus put France comfortably ahead of Japan and Britain.

The concept of the TGV project is

different from any railway built so far. The electric multiple unit articulated train-sets are capable of climbing gradients of 3.5 percent — a major economy in a hilly country.

Then there are no lineside signals, so common on conventional railways, the signals being provided in the driver's cabin itself, as it is physically difficult for him to observe outside signals at 260 km/h.

What is more, the TGV project is well integrated with SNCF's existing network. This will facilitate extension of TGV services to destinations beyond Lyon and provide direct services to city centres. This has not been possible in Japan where the isolation of gauge from the national network requires new routes into the heart of each city. Thus running at 260 km/h on the new line, trains in France can now link towns 500 to 600 kms apart in timings that match air travel.



What impelled France to go in for TGV trains?

The reason was, of course, the need to increase capacity as in the case of countries like Italy, Germany, and Japan which have also opted for high speed trains. As early as the 1960s, congestion on the two-track section of Paris-Lyon lines over the hills north of Dijon imposed a limit on the future growth of traffic.

The solution was obviously to provide extra tracks or build a second parallel route. But the engineers and operators struck on a plan of segregating passenger and freight traffic on parallel routes. This offered the prospect of a three-fold increase in capacity by resolving the speed conflict inherent in the mixed goods and passenger traffic.

Giving a new line exclusively for passenger traffic, the advantages of using it for achieving faster services were overwhelming. Moreover, with

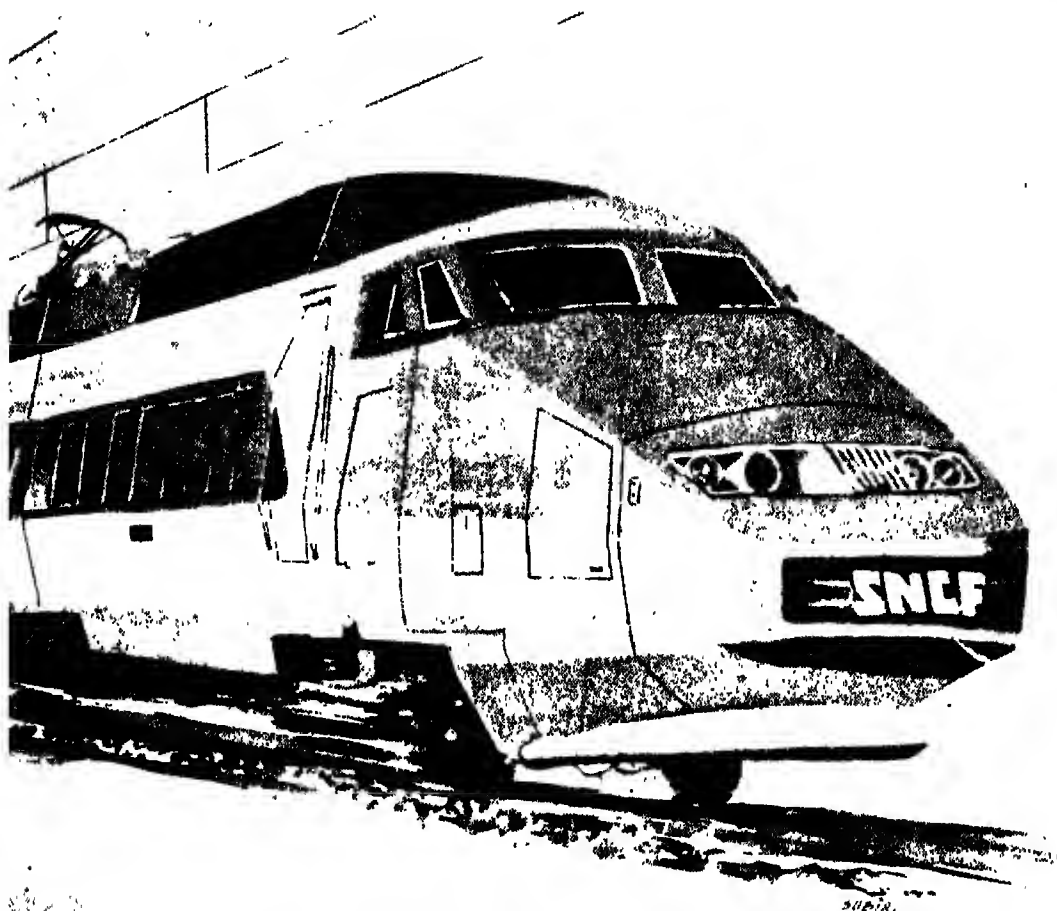
the population concentrated around Paris and distant cities, air travel offers serious competition to the train.

The French railway (SNCF)—already a holder of 331 km/h world speed record for commercial rolling stock since 1955 — therefore, set out to amass the experience of very high speed running for translating the 260 km/h TGV concept into reality.

Without sacrificing traditional qualities of safety and comfort, the new 426 km line, when completely finished this year, will be covered in two hours. Typical of the élan with which the project has been launched, the TGV fliers will fan out to reach points as far away as Geneva in four and a quarter hours, something the rest of the world will take long to catch up with.

The launching of TGV trains is indeed a historic moment for French Railways.

K.R. Vaidyanathan





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# India Lose Pakistan Series

**T**HE recently-concluded six-Test series between India and Pakistan was undoubtedly one-sided. India lost the series 3-0, thanks to better bowling, batting and fielding by their opponents. Three Tests were drawn, and only in the first did India put up a good show. The fifth and sixth Tests were marred by rain and hostile elements, respectively. There were some individual performances in these two matches, but nothing could undo the damage suffered in the earlier matches.

An India-Pakistan cricket series always arouses great interest, especially when the two teams boast of individual superstars amidst them. And the expectations of the public are also great, as both the teams in their previous encounters in 1978 and 1980 had produced results.

While in the 1978 series, India under Bishen Singh Bedi lost the Rubber to Mushtaq and his band of professional cricketers in Pakistan, Gavaskar avenged the defeat in the 1980 return series in India with a 2-0 win.

Hence it is that the recent contest—the six Test series of 1982-83—had been accepted as the ultimate challenge in both the countries. For Pakistan, the series had come as a godsend opportunity to avenge the defeat suffered in India. And with Imran Khan, its dynamic opening bowler and captain, having already promised a drubbing to India, the battle lines appeared to have been drawn from the very outset.

And judging by the first three mat-

ches at Lahore, Karachi and Faisalabad, the overall result appeared a foregone conclusion. With Pakistan winning two Tests convincingly at Karachi and Faisalabad, only an extreme optimist would have given India any chances of a comeback.

While the Lahore Test was disrupted by rain, the Pakistan team gave enough indications of its firepower. This was amply demonstrated in Karachi and

*Imran Khan*







*Zaheer Abbas*

Faislabad where India were beaten with ridiculous ease.

To take the third Test first. The Faislabad match, one thought judging by the wicket, would be a tall scoring one with little scope for a result. It was tall scoring all right but only for the Pakistan side, with four of its batsmen scoring centuries. The onslaught was led by the great Zaheer, who followed up his double century at Lahore and

a near double at Karachi with a scintillating ton at Faislabad. And the way he seemed collecting runs, there was little doubt that the feast was not yet over for him.

He seemed to thrive on Indian bowling which, barring Kapil Dev, had nothing to offer. And Inran was right, when he said in an interview that India would not be able to get his side out twice in a match. And in none of the Tests till then had Pakistan had to bat twice, barring, of course, the brief ten minutes stint at Faislabad to score the required seven runs for victory.

But this is not to deny any credit to Zaheer who had been in a punishing mood throughout the matches played till then. He had had six centuries in first class matches played against India till then.

While Miandad, Inran, Salim Malik, Mudazzar, and Mohsin had also collected a hundred each in the Tests till then, their efforts pale into insignificance compared to Zaheer's knocks.

At Faislabad, as at Karachi, the Indian batting wilted initially under the Pak attack. But this time, its middle order batting fought with its back to the wall and managed to put up what would in normal circumstances have been a fairly sizeable total. But against a batting line-up which boasts of Zaheer and Miandad, this was not enough. More so because it did not have the bowlers to get the Pak team out. So, it was that its 372 just did not help, as the home side managed to give India a lead of 280 in turn. But some debatable decisions, especially regarding LBW, made matters worse. And in these, India were the sufferer. But more important, one felt that India scored too fast. They should have batted at least for two days. But on the first day

itself they piled up 334 in 330 minutes.

Be that as it may, India lost the match as they could not put up the necessary fight, except for Mohinder and Gavaskar. Once three quick wickets fell, it was feared that the slide would begin. But Mohinder and Gavaskar gave some hope and took the score to 188 before the former was given out in what appeared to be a blatantly doubtful LBW decision. After that Gavaskar, who carried his bat through beside notching up his 26th century to equal Sobers's record, waged a lone battle. But with his team-mates deserting him, there was hardly anything he could have done to prevent Pakistan scoring their second successive win against India. The only saving grace was that Pakistan were made to bat a second time albeit for ten minutes.

This was not so in the Karachi Test where India were first bundled out for 169 and then given a lead of 283. Here India failed in the second innings and ended up losing the match by an innings. But it must be said to Imran's credit that he was responsible for the debacle in the second innings when in a fiery spell he ended up destroying Gavaskar, Vishwanath, Patil, and others. Imran was simply unplayable. But even then it was felt that Kapil and Patil should not have played injudicious strokes in the second innings.

The second Test also saw Zaheer knocking up a century, this time in Mudassar's company. This is not to say that Pakistan did not have their share of trouble. Before the fight back by Zaheer and Mudassar, India had taken three quick wickets to raise some hopes of a fightback. But that was a false alarm, as thereafter their bowlers just could

not do much. Neither Kapil nor Doshi, the established bowlers, could get any purchase from the wicket.

Even though the first Test at Lahore was drawn, with both sides scoring heavily and Mohinder making a grand comeback and Sunil scoring a gritty 82, it was obvious that the Indian batting needed to be perked up as did the bowling. While they had batsmen of class, there were no howlers worth the name to get Pakistan out twice. And with Zaheer making his intentions clear from the first Test itself with a double century, India must have been well aware of what to expect.

While Indians had themselves to blame for the defeats, poor umpiring had also caused some apprehension in their minds. In all the matches till then there were some peculiar LBW decisions against them. And again, some of their most vociferous appeals against Zaheer and Miandad were turned down.

Imran Khan, with convincing victories at Karachi and Faisalabad, clinched the issue at Hyderabad with an innings victory. And the Indian team continued to put up a dispirited performance without putting up a fight, albeit some individual performances.

The Hyderabad match was one of records. The Pakistan batsmen continued to pulverise the Indian bowling, with Mudassar and Javed Miandad establishing individual records besides breaking the world record. While Mudassar scored a career best 231, Miandad went on to make an unbeaten 280—the second highest (individual) score by a Pakistani player. He thus displaced Zaheer, who earlier held this enviable position when he compiled 274

against England. The record, of course, is Hanif Mohammad's who scored 364 runs in an innings.

While Pakistan went on to pile 580 runs in the Hyderabad match and that too for three wickets, the Indians folded up for a mere 189—a shocking performance. The only redeeming feature of their innings was a gutsy 61 by Mohinder and a plucky 71 from debutant, medium-pacer Sandhu. The rest just folded up against Imran's pace.

The Indians did not better in the second innings when, following on, they managed to raise a total of 273. India thus lost the match and the series to Pakistan. The Hyderabad match was won by Pakistan by an innings and 119 runs.

The Pakistan win was convincing and even though some debatable decisions did not help matters much, it was obvious that the better team had won. Pakistan beat us on all fronts—batting, bowling, and fielding.

The fifth Test was of no significance, because Pakistan had already clinched the issue. But it was here that one saw a belated revival of Indian bowling, with Kapil Dev capturing eight wickets. But again, from the Indian side only Mohinder Amarnath struck a purple patch and helped his image by adding another ton to his credit. This match, for all practical purposes, was no match because it was ruined by rain and had to be abandoned.

The sixth and final Test at Lahore saw India recalling Ravi Shastri, who came in the place of Srikanth, as Gavaskar's partner. And what a comeback! He scored a painstaking hundred and with Venkatarakar lent some res-

pectability to Indian batting. India scored 393. Pakistan replied with 420 for six. This was on the fourth day around lunch. At this time, some rowdy elements decided to spoil the fun, managing to create enough disturbance. Play was abandoned for the day. On the fifth and last day, however, Imran, in an attempt to snatch another win, declared at the overnight score of 420 for six only. India, however, managed to pile up a good score of 240 for two with Mohinder again scoring a century—his third in the series. Gavaskar made an attractive 66.

While Pakistan won the series, because they were a better team in all respects, it must be said that the Indian team was also strong—but only on paper. When the series started, India boasted of a strong batting line up. But Imran Khan changed all that.

For Pakistan, Imran, Zaheer, Mian-dad and Mudassar were the heroes. India had only Mohinder and Gavaskar to be proud of. They were the only two successful batsmen in the series.

Bowling-wise, though Kapil had a rich haul, he did not really pose problems for the batsmen. Of all the bowlers—spinners and pacemen alike, he was the only one to collect a healthy number of scalps.

One only hopes that India's performance in the West Indies will be better, especially after some changes have been made in the team. One welcomes the return of Venkataragavan and Gaikwad into the team. One is, however, happier that Ashok Malhotra has after all got his due. He should do well in the Caribbean.

T. Sharma

(Continued from page 8)

Pratap was eager to find out what his mother would prepare for the picnic. When he reached home, he found the front door bolted from inside. That meant his parents were not at home. Only his sister would be there. That also meant he might not get anything to eat, and he suddenly felt very hungry. What an anti-climax to a fine day, he thought. He had finished his exams, a picnic had been arranged. He was happy. But happiness always increased his hunger!

He went round the house. Beena was in the backyard, caressing her little lamb. As she noticed Pratap getting into the house, she got up. "Now, Chinnu," she told her pet, "be quiet for sometime. Pratap has come after his examination. Let me go and make tea for him."

"As if you can make tea!" sneered Pratap. "Where's mummy gone, when I want her most?"

"She has gone to the market with father. She has left some cake for you. I will make tea."

"Who wants your tea? In any case, you don't know how to make good tea. Even Chinnu won't take what you make."

"Oh, come on, Pratap, you know I can make very good tea. Why, the tea you took this morning was prepared by me. What was wrong with that?"

"Everything was all right, except that it didn't taste like tea."

Beena's face fell. Pratap felt sorry. He did not want to hurt her. His sister, who was two years older than he, could make not only tea but a variety of delicacies. He knew it well. But today he was upset as his mother was away.

He felt sorry for Beena. He really wanted the cake and the tea. He was quite hungry. But he was too proud to take back his word.

"I'm going out. You can have the cake

and the tea!" he shouted as he ran away.

He walked towards Appu's house which was not far from his own. He felt angry and sorry that a good day had been spoilt.

"Hello, Pratap! Come in. How did you do the papers? Appu has been telling me about your picnic." It was Appu's mother.

Pratap liked to watch her smile. "Yes, auntie. Isn't Appu in?"

"You know where to find him! He has half-emptied the kitchen already! Go and join him. I'll get some tea for you."

Appu's was a big house, and modern, too. It was, in fact, the only house in the village with a terrace, bath attached bed rooms, and a separate dining room.

Appu, however, never sat at the dining table except when his father was home on annual vacation. He always preferred to eat in the kitchen.

Pratap went into the dining room, wondering whether to move into the kitchen or not, when Appu came out with a plateful of hot vadas.

"Ah, come on. P. Pratap. How many of these can you eat? I bet I'll eat at least one more than what you eat!"

"I accept the challenge. Let's see."

They sat down at the table, with the vadas. Finally, one was left. Before Appu could reach his hand, the vada had disappeared into Pratap's mouth!

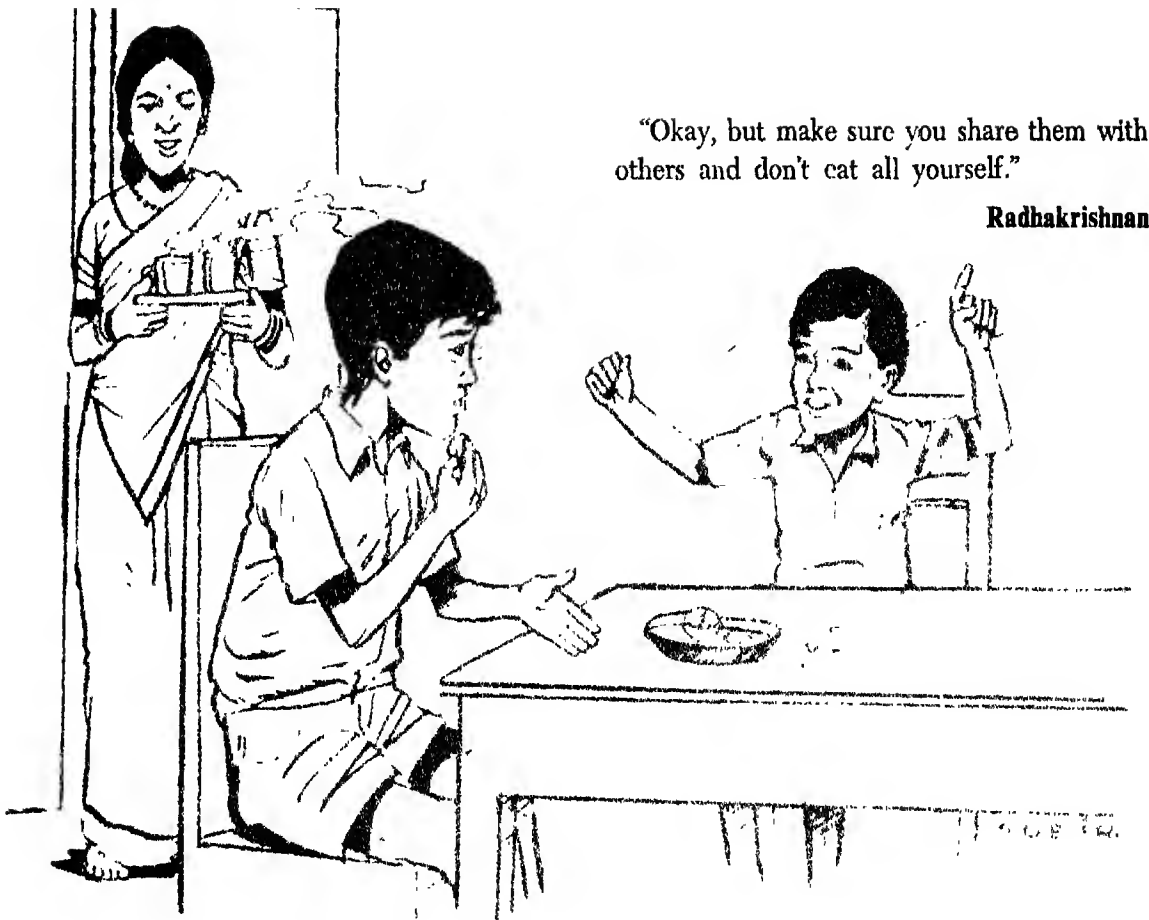
"So, I've won the bet!" Appu thumped the table.

"How's it? I ate one more than you," Pratap claimed.

"But I had eaten two before you came in," said Appu with a mischievous smile.

"No, Appu," said his mother who came into the room with tea. "You can't claim credit for that! Pratap has won. So he gets an extra pinch of sugar in his tea."

Pratap had by then forgotten all about the quarrel with his sister.



"Okay, but make sure you share them with others and don't eat all yourself."

**Radhakrishnan**

"Mummy, can you make lots of vadas for the picnic?"

"Yes, auntie," Pratap backed him, "you make the best vadas in the world."

"Okay, I'll make vadas and coconut chutney. What are you taking, Pratap?"

"We've lots of bananas in our compound. I'll take them, if mother permits."

By the time Pratap got back home, his parents had also returned. So he had another round of tea, with cakes.

"How's the tea?" asked his mother.

"As sweet as you, mummy."

"I thought you would say that. Beena made it!"

"So what? I know she too is a good cook, at least at home," said Pratap with a smile. "I was only teasing you then, Beena. Your tea is excellent. By the way, mummy could I take some bananas for the picnic?"

*(Continued from page 50)*

because the children now go out, after especially windy days, to collect all the birds fallen from their nests and bring them back to be cared for. During the school holidays, the birds are boarded out at the children's homes and live there as part of the family.

By the time the school reopens in September, the young herons are quite domesticated. But they are also nearly full grown, ready to make their winter journey to warmer lands. The children bid them good-bye, hoping to recognise them again the following spring. The birds then fly up to the trees where they rejoin the other herons and prepare for their long journey.

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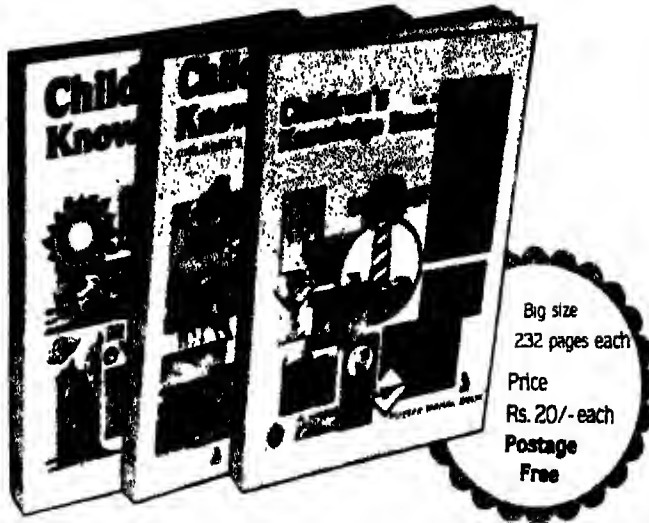
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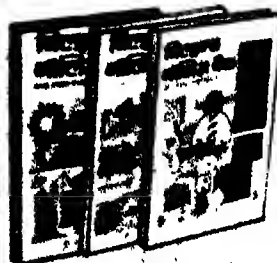
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Vol. I • What is plastic surgery? • Why don't women have beard? • Do giants live on earth? • How was Mount Everest named? • How were cartoons started? • How are lakes formed? • Are there mountains inside the sea? • What are the rings of Saturn? • What is our earth? • Is there life on other planets? • How was the submarine invented? • What is a torpedo?

Vol. II • Do cannibals still exist in the world? • Why does the sky appear blue? • How do advertisement boards shine? • Why do rain bearing clouds appear black? • What is hydrogen bomb? • How are radio waves useful for us? • What is Darwin's theory of evolution? • How did the practice of shaking hands begin? • How polio attacks children? • How do female mammals produce milk? • How is urine formed in our body? • Why is one of our feet bigger than the other? • Why do we have two eyes? • Why is blood red? • How do parrot and myna speak like us? • How does snake venom affect us? • How does fish breathe inside water? • Why is whale not considered a fish? • Why don't spiders get caught in their own webs? • What causes tides in the seas? • How is weather forecast made? • What are constellations? • Did the game of chess originate in India? • When did cricket start?

Vol. III • Why do we get pimples? • What is a test-tube baby? • Why were the pyramids of Egypt built? • Why do we dream? • What are dinosaurs? • What is Death Valley? • What are isotopes? • Can any serpent fly? • What is Yoga? • What is Marathon race?

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# CHILDREN'S World

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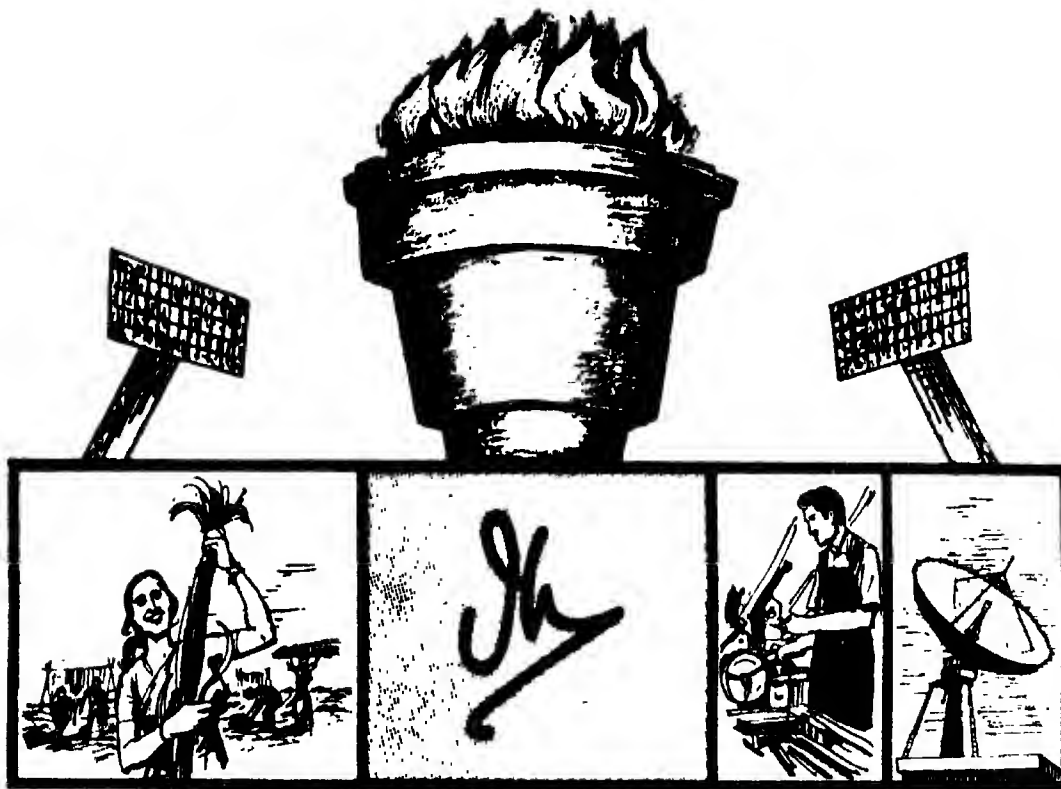
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# Sixteen

**A**NOTHER year has gone by, and we have reached the sixteenth year of publication.

Like milestones which spring up at stipulated intervals, the past fifteen Annual Numbers, too, have notched progress, and some success.

We remember our beginnings — as an offshoot of the then nineteen-year-old Shankar's International Children's Competition.

The magazine — started as a weekly — was thought of as an outlet for all the good entries that came for the Competition.

As there was a dearth of writers *for* children, the magazine was also expected to provide a training ground for aspiring writers.

We owe our success to the *children* who shared with us their talents in writing and drawing; to the *writers* who strived to give their best for children; and, of course, to our *readers* who sustained their interest in the magazine even when they 'outgrew' its pages.

In an attempt to recall our origins, we feature the 33rd Shankar's International Children's Competition — on the cover with a Nehru Award winning painting from Burma; in the story from Sri Lanka that won the highest award for a written work; in photographs that capture all the excitement and joy of winning a prize; and in eye-witness accounts of what can be called the culmination of a year's competition.

New features are aplenty — whatever was possible within this thinner-than-usual April issue.

Many other features are held over for the next issue which, we assure you, will keep you equally engrossed, like the Sixteenth Annual Number now in your hands.

Wish you many hours of joyous reading.

**EDITOR**

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Cover: "Young Artist" by Mya Mya Thit (12) Burma  
(Courtesy: Shankar's International Children's Competition)

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The prizes won by more than 800 children in Shankar's International Children's Competition 1982 were distributed by the President of India, Mr. Zail Singh, at a colourful function in New Delhi on February 11. A 3-page photo feature here is supplemented by 'first person singular' accounts from two prizewinners, who came from Gujarat and West Bengal to take their prizes in person.

## A MEMORABLE FUNCTION

By Smita Vittal (10)

ONE day, when I returned from school, I saw a letter on the mantelpiece. At first, I did not care about it. Later, when I turned it over, I saw it was addressed to me. I tore open the envelope as quickly as I could and, after reading the letter, my eyes shone with excitement and delight. "Dear Smita," the letter read, "You will be happy to know that the President of India, Giani Zail Singh, has agreed to distribute the awards to the winners in Shankar's International Children's Competition. You have won a Bronze medal for your written entry. Please do try and come on 11th February. (Sd.) Yamuna Shankar, Secretary."

That day I was in high spirits. We decided to plan everything the next day. Soon it was planned that I would go to Ahmedabad on the 9th and catch a flight to Delhi the next day. I eagerly awaited the D-day. I had to carry woollens with me, as I was told Delhi is very cold in February.

On 9th, we left for Ahmedabad. There I spent a day with my friends. Next morning, we left for the airport. The flight was enjoyable. While landing in Delhi, the air-hostess announced that the temperature outside was only 7 degrees! We all suddenly felt the chill as we stepped out.

I got down, full of eagerness to get hold of my badge and card that my uncle had already collected for me. The badge was very pretty. I spent the day with my cousin. The next evening, at 4.30, we reached the Mavalankar Hall, where the function was to be held. The prizewinners had separate seats. I took my seat and looked round. The Diplomats of various countries were sitting in the front rows. Behind them sat the parents. The stage was decorated beautifully. In the centre were five red chairs and a big one for the Rashtrapati.

*(Turn over for photographs)*



*Above, left: President Zail Singh being received by Mr. Shankar; left: The President releases the Children's Art Number; Below, left to right: Diplomats from Denmark, Argentina and China receiving the prizes. Facing page: Top: Diplomats from Nigeria and South Korea; Middle, left: Diplomat from Guyana; right: Hans Wijayasuriya of Sri Lanka receiving the Children's Book Trust Gold Medal for the Best Written Work. Bottom: Diplomats from Yugoslavia and Laos.*









*Top: A prize from the President, a smile for everybody; Above, left: a section of the audience; right: Praveen Swami, who presided over the Prize Distribution, receives a Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Gold Medal; at left: The prizewinners at the reception held in their honour.*

The Rashtrapati arrived on the dot. He took his seat and the whole programme was then conducted by five school children. The 'President' of the function was a boy who won the first position in an elocution contest. First, there was a welcome speech. After that a report on the Competition. The President released the latest Children's Art Number.

Then came the main item of the day. The prizes won by children outside India were distributed first. They were received by the Diplomats. Names of the Indian prizewinners were then called out and the Rashtrapati gave each one a medal and a certificate. As I went up, my legs trembled, but I took courage and shook hands with our Rashtrapati, Giani Zail Singh. As I received

the medal, I thought the Rashtrapati was a kind man and he had twinkling eyes. He then made his speech which was very humorous.

At the end of the programme, the National Anthem was sung and everyone filed out of the hall. A lady suddenly took me and my friend to a corner. She interviewed us for All India Radio. That was thrilling.

The next day, there was a tea party for all the prizewinners. Children sang songs, cracked jokes, and chatted to their heart's content. The food was lovely.

After the excitement had died down, I had to return home. On the flight back, I decided to compete in the Competition again.

---

# A Red Letter Day

By Sreelata De (13)

I HAD voiced the wish of all the prize-winners that "we would come again next year", when I wrote in the March 1982 issue of "Children's World". My wish came true, and I was once again in Delhi, for the prize distribution ceremony of the 33rd Shankar's International Children's Competition. Of course,

there were many new faces.

The venue was once again the Mavalankar auditorium. The day, 11th February. This time it was none other than the President of India, Giani Zail Singh, himself who was distributing the prizes. The previous day, we collected our badges and invitation cards.

The ceremony was to start at 5 p.m. We all reached the hall a little after 4, and our expectant faces looked out eagerly for the arrival of the President. Mr. Zail Singh came exactly at 5. The National Anthem was sung by children from the Springdales School. The President was then garlanded.

Little Varsha Sarwade began the function by welcoming the gathering. Manish Kumar Baheti presented a report on the progress of the Competition and other activities of the Children's Book Trust, all devoted to the cause of children. The 'Presidential' speech was made by Praveen Swami, who had stood first in the elocution competition. He carried the day with him by his poise and conduct while he occupied the 'President's' chair. The Rashtrapati then released the Shankar's Children's Art Number Volume 33 at Praveen's request. This annual compendium is a deluxe, multi-coloured publication, containing all the 800 odd prizewinning entries.

Followed the distribution of prizes. India headed the list with 122 prizes. Japan and Sri Lanka came second, with 44 each. Hans Wijayasuriya of Sri Lanka, who won the Children's Book Trust Gold Medal, received his award in person. He was the only prizewinner from abroad who made it to Delhi. The prizes won by the children in other countries were received on their behalf by the representatives of the respective Diplomatic missions in New Delhi, to be delivered to the children later. Finally, a colourful lot lined up to go up the stage. That was us, children from all parts of India and also from New Delhi. Suddenly, I realised: "I

am standing before the President of India!" The announcer, Simren Sangha, called out my name twice to wake me from my reverie.

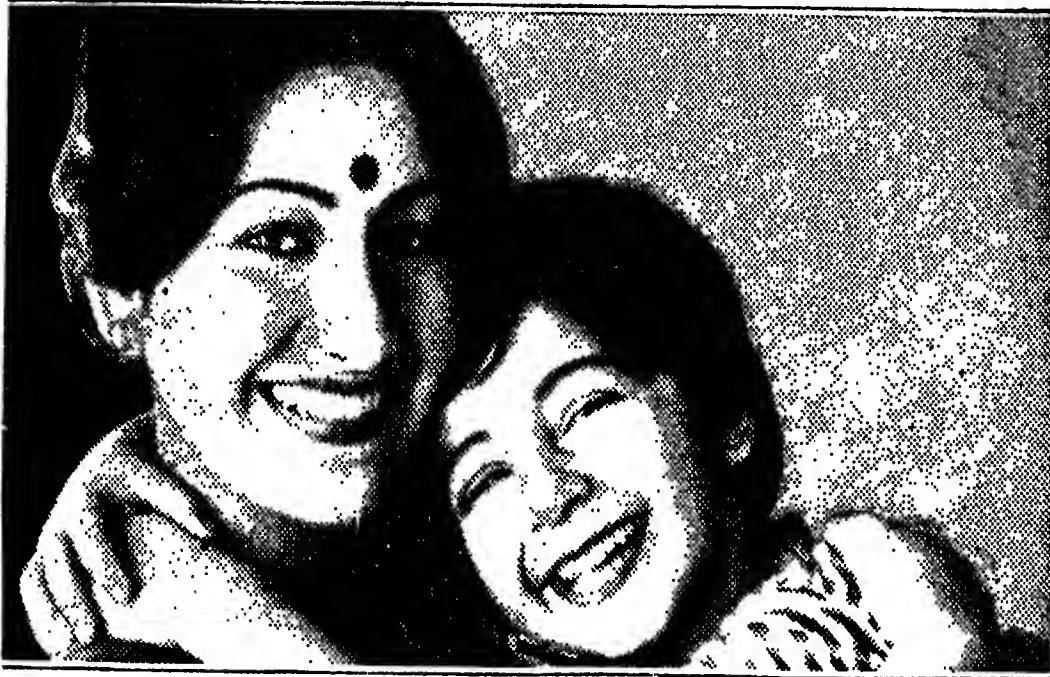
President Giani Zail Singh in his speech said these 33 years of the Competition had brought together children all over the world. Cheers and clapping filled the air when he remarked that Shankar is not an individual but an institution. He called for the opening of centres of the Children's Book Trust in different parts of the country, so that they could help in the flowering of young talent. "Catch them young," he said and praised the organising capacity of children. Children are like God, he added and said, at that very moment, he was seeing India in the eyes of the children. He ended his speech by congratulating the prizewinners and saying that an occasion like this would always be a guiding light for all.

While proposing the vote of thanks, Ali Reza Alaie wished that the prizewinners from every corner of the globe could come here to receive their awards in person.

The following day the prizewinners were given a reception at "Nehru House". We were treated to sweets; chips, cakes, and a lot of other delicacies. It was a merry occasion, made merrier by the very informal atmosphere.

What we all must have started as a hobby — painting — now has been turned into an exhibition of our talents — thanks to Uncle Shankar and his love for children.

**"Mummy, Promise has won  
the gold medal again."**

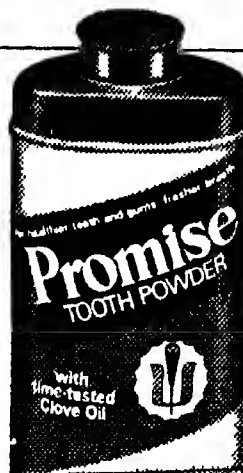


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# THE CRIPPLE



THE crowds surged forward shoving and pressing towards the stage. In the midst a hand pedalled tricycle picked its way cautiously towards the speaker. As the cripple advanced slowly, the crowd fast overtook him and now before him was a giant wall of people pasted against each other. He sat back in his seat and listened. All he could see was a kite swaying frantically in the sky. He felt the speaker churning the minds of the listeners, he heard the joy that flamed in the rising cheers. He wondered at the speaker's words, he heard him speak of agriculture, of arms, and of the fuel market.

Black clouds crept up the sky, a biting wind breathed as the first drops fell, breaking apart the crowd. The people scurried away like a dispersed family of ants. The speaker bellowed out his final words. The green lay empty except for the tricycle, a

blur in the pouring rain, creeping on towards the waiting road of movement. Headlights slashed the darkness, like spears cutting the night. Lines of traffic streamed forth. He leaned forward like an oarsman at his oars. He neared the road and then merged into its vast hive of movement. As he pedalled on, the thought of the speaker's words. They raged like wildfire in his mind and in each car and bus which overtook his tricycle, the same thoughts and feelings were born. He looked down at his torn, ragged clothes, he remembered he was not a part of his country, he owned nothing but his tricycle. Like a snail he crawled in the dark, — unseen, hidden. The country was vast around him, elections and voting, companies and factories, hate and murder, friends and families. He had strayed from the lives of other men, the doors of life had been shut behind him. He was bound in a small world, alone and cold to draw a living from the world around him.

His hair uncombed, he hunched in his little seat, withered like a dried fish, — he knew he hated the world for his fate. Rain fell down on him like a web of steel, his eyes shone bitter and cruel from his shrivelled face, his teeth chattered with cold, while warm light poured from windows. Christmas trees sparkled within. The joys, the beauties of nature, and the world were made for other men—even the speaker spoke not to him but to the other men around him, to the rich as well as to the poor who could work and make. Why need he speak to a cripple? A cripple was small, like an ant, a man left behind by life to die in the cold of the streets. On the roadside, lifeless posters read '1981 — the year of the disabled'.



*Hans Wijayasuriya (13) of Sri Lanka won the Children's Book Trust Award for "The Cripple", adjudged the best written work in Shankar's International Children's Competition 1982.*

Was the world really trying to draw him into its web of life, make him into a man — a rich man? Greed filled his heart, — if he could take from the rich, he would be rich too. His heart pounded with hate, but he was a cripple stilled into a still life. He remained in his dark alley way waiting for a helping hand to draw him out from the lake of the disabled.

That night, as he sat on his tricycle eating his small plate of rice, a starved dog sat beside him. It wagged its tail in asking. Anger filled the cripple's heart. He reached for a stone and hurled it. The dog howled with pain and ran away, — a hind limb hanging limp. The cripple's hand froze, his eyes filled with tears. He had drawn another life into his world, he could yet hear the dog yelling far away in the darkness. He spread his rice on the pavement. Though crippled, it would return — chased by hunger and thirst.

*(Reprinted from Shankar's  
Children's Art Number, Vol. 33)*

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**R**ANJITA chuckled to herself as she worked with the crayons on the back of her black coat. Her twin, Raju, often asked her for the coat. But she had always turned down his request. He had pleaded with her. He had offered her chocolates and chewing gums. He had even promised to help her in cleaning up the cupboard, a task their mother always gave to Ranjita. But Ranjita had never yielded to his request.

'Ah, his face will flush with joy when I tell him he can have the coat, for just one day. And then I'll have real fun.' Ranjita busied herself with painting the slogan she had in mind. She wrote it, slowly. She worked with great artistry. She shaped each letter with care. She was completely engrossed in what she was doing.

She had just completed writing the slogan on the coat when she heard Raju rushing in shouting, "Ah, Ranjita, where are you? Why didn't you join me today? I cycled all around the park. I went after a squirrel. The poor thing....."

Ranjita jumped up. She quickly hung up the coat in the wardrobe and stood at the door. Raju bumped into her. Ranjita smiled. "Ah, you went after a squirrel...? What happened to it, then?"

"Oh, it ran for its life. It just managed to run up a tree. Then it grinned at me. It waved its tail. Just as you put your tongue out and tease me." Raju looked at Ranjita's face.

"Want a fight now?" Ranjita put her tongue out and mocked him. Raju laughed.

"Raju," Ranjita called him, softly.

"Yes, Ranjita?"

"I've a surprise for you. If you're a good boy, you'll get it tomorrow."

"Sure? Tell me, Ranjita, what's it?"

"I can't tell you today. You've to wait till tomorrow."

"It's going to be very difficult. But I think there's little that I can do!" Raju sighed and ran off.

## Twin Moves



Ranjita watched him move off. Then she mumbled to herself, 'Ah, he'll get a real surprise tomorrow.'

Raju ran back to the study. He leaned on the table and looked all around. He wondered what surprise Ranjita had in store for him. He just couldn't make any guess.

His eyes then fell on the calendar. One look at it and suddenly he had an idea. He forgot all about the surprise that Ranjita had promised him for the next day. He



decided to have some fun. 'It's a rare chance, and I shall not miss it,' he mumbled.

He searched for a cardboard. He pulled out an old piece. He reached out for the scissors. He sat on the floor, and traced a figure on the cardboard. He erased the lines that did not go well with the figure. He then redrew the lines. It took him nearly an hour before he was satisfied with his work. The drawing pleased him.

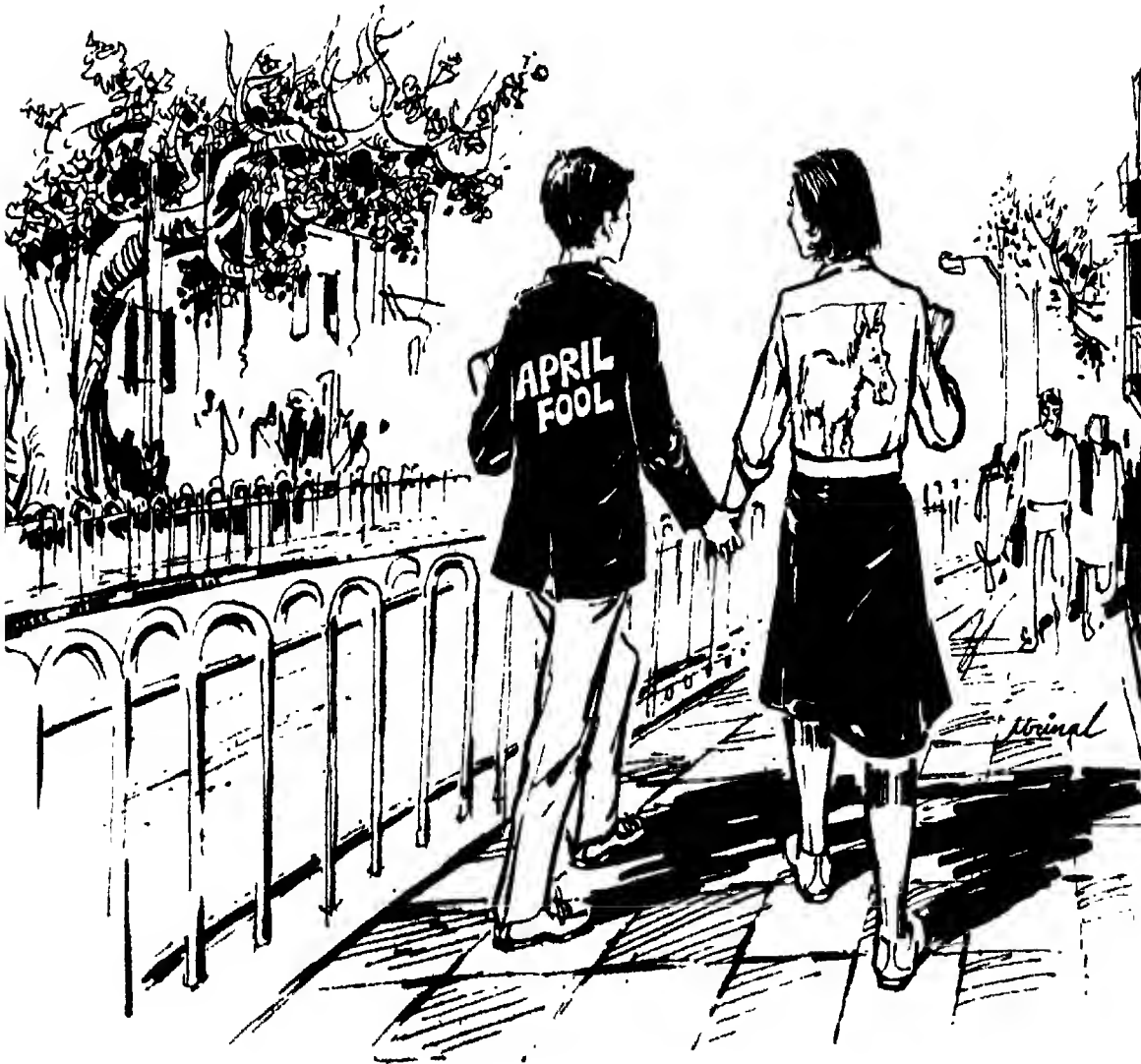
Raju picked up the scissors. He worked with the utmost care and concentration. He cut along the outer line of the drawing. Finally, the cardboard Raju held resembled the figure he had drawn. He turned it in his hand. He looked at it with immense delight. That was a good job. His drawing master would be pleased if he were to see his work. But he felt Ranjita might not be

all that happy.

Raju ran his pencil all over the figure. He shaded it again and again till the whole figure looked lead black. He looked at the figure. It was now ready for use.

Raju waited till Ranjita got busy with their mother in the kitchen. He made a dash for her wardrobe. He opened it, making the slightest noise. He spotted the shirt Ranjita had ironed, ready to wear to school the next day. He turned it. He carefully pressed the pencilled side of the figure on the back of the shirt. He pressed it hard. Then he lifted the cardboard. There, on the shirt, was the figure he had stamped on it. Then he put back the shirt, front up, and ran out, happy at his work.

Next day, Raju and Ranjita were getting ready for school. Ranjita turned to Raju.



"Ah, Raju, I told you I've a surprise for you. You've been wanting to wear my black coat. You can have it. Just for today. What do you say?"

"You're a darling!" said Raju, while Ranjita pulled out the coat and helped Raju get into it.

"You look wonderful, *bhaiyya*," Ranjita sounded very excited.

Then she began to look out for her shirt. Raju came in her way. "One good turn deserves another. You've given me your coat. You helped me put it on. Now, let me get your shirt. Let me also help you slip into it. What do you say?"

"I know I've a very loving brother," said Ranjita, looking pleased with herself.

Raju picked up the shirt. He held it in such a way Ranjita could not see the figure he had printed on the back. He helped her get into the shirt.

They picked up their bags, waved to their mother, and walked out. It was then they heard their mother burst out into a loud laughter. Ranjita and Raju turned.

"Come here, both of you."

The children were puzzled. They ran back to her. She hugged them and said, "Ah, so Raju, you're an April fool! At least that's what your coat says."

Raju turned angrily towards Ranjita.

But his mother held him down. She then turned to Ranjita. "So, my girl, you're a *donkey*. That's what your shirt sports!"

"You scoundrel!" Ranjita whirled around, angrily, reaching out for Raju.

"Ah, children, today is the first of April. A little prank is all right. Now, go and change your dress and rush to school. There is little time left."

"April fool!" Ranjita sneered.

"Donkey!" scowled Raju.

They both laughed. They had had some real fun. Their twin moves had given them a happy time.

R.K. Murthi

APRIL 1983

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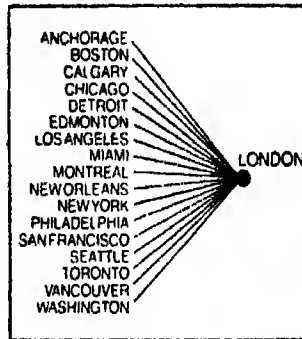
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“WILL you tie that filthy pup outside, Rinki? I told you, no dog will be allowed in here,” said her mother crossly.

“Mummy, please, I’m sure he won’t dirty the house. See how happy he is ... he’s prancing on the carpet! I’ll clean up, if there is any mess,” pleaded Rinki, defending her little pup, Panna.

Nine-year-old Rinki had yearned for a pup ever since the Raos became their neighbours. They had a huge black labrador. “Yes, he is my prize dog,” Mr. Rao would say proudly, and Blacky would wag his tail contentedly at these words of praise. Sticking out his pink tongue, he would approach Rinki and obediently sit in front of her. The girl would pat his gleaming black fur with awe.

“Uncle, please tell my Mummy. She does not allow me to keep dogs. I feel

they’re so wonderful,” Rinki would say.

“When I come home from school, there’s no one I can play with. I read books, but for how long?” said Rinki with tears in her eyes.

Unfortunately, their small colony had no children of Rinki’s age with whom she could spend her time.

“Young lady, I’ll speak to your mother. I don’t promise anything, but I’ll try,” said Mr. Rao, his eyes twinkling. At this, old Mr. Rao was subjected to an impulsive bearhug which quite took his breath away. “Uncle, you’re great!”

Later that evening, Rinki hid behind the curtain, listening to her mother’s conversation with Mr. Rao. Wonder of wonders, she agreed to keep a dog! Rinki ran in and smothered her mother’s face with kisses. And Mr. Rao was rewarded with yet another bearhug!

Rinki had finally got her way. But, now this problem—of keeping her handsome Panna out, because he had dirtied the room the previous day.

“Mummy,” she began, but her mother cut her short.

“Rinki dear, your Panna is no longer a pup. He is now three months old, and you promised to train him within this period. You must have a sense of responsibility.” Her mother’s tone was firm, yet understanding.

Rinki made up her mind. Yes, she had not kept her part of the deal. She realized that though her parents were not particularly fond of dogs, they had allowed her to keep Panna.

Rinki would now come home from school, eat her lunch and straightway complete her homework. She would then be free to be with Panna. With a sense of purpose, she went about coaching the dog to behave. Mr. Rao would watch Rinki’s determination and

often went and gave her useful suggestions.

Another three months, and Rinki had nearly achieved her target. Mr. Rao praised her with just one word. . . . . "Bravo". Blackie, too, would now treat six-month-old Panna with respect and the two of them would play together in the lawns.

"Panna has to be a little more perfect," said her mother, "but you can take him to your room, now and then." That was some concession.

"And he must stop licking and begging when he sees us eating," added her father.

Rinki was disappointed, but did not lose hope.

A week afterwards, Rinki and her parents were at the dinner table. They were startled when they heard frenzied barking coming from Rinki's room where she had left Panna asleep.

Rinki rushed to her room to quieten him, but turned back in horror when she saw a most frightening sight. There was a snake in a corner of the room, and Panna was barking excitedly at it. The snake would wriggle and hiss menacingly, but Panna forced it to stay in the corner.

Rinki screamed and ran back to her

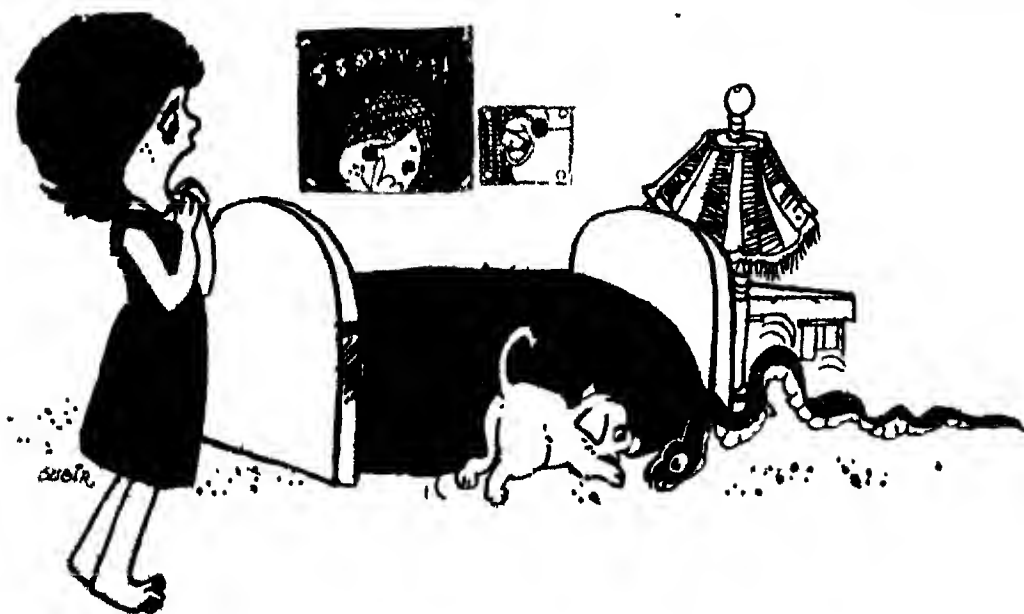
parents and told them about the commotion in her room. Her father grabbed a stick and reaching Rinki's room, he climbed on to the bed. Just then the snake tried to slide under the bed, but Panna grabbed its tail and stopped it from moving. The stick came down on the snake with a hard blow. It lay stunned for a moment. This was the opportunity Panna had been waiting for. Grabbing the snake in his mouth, he shook his head from side to side and then dropped his catch. The snake lay dead! Panna sat down and smacked his lips in satisfaction.

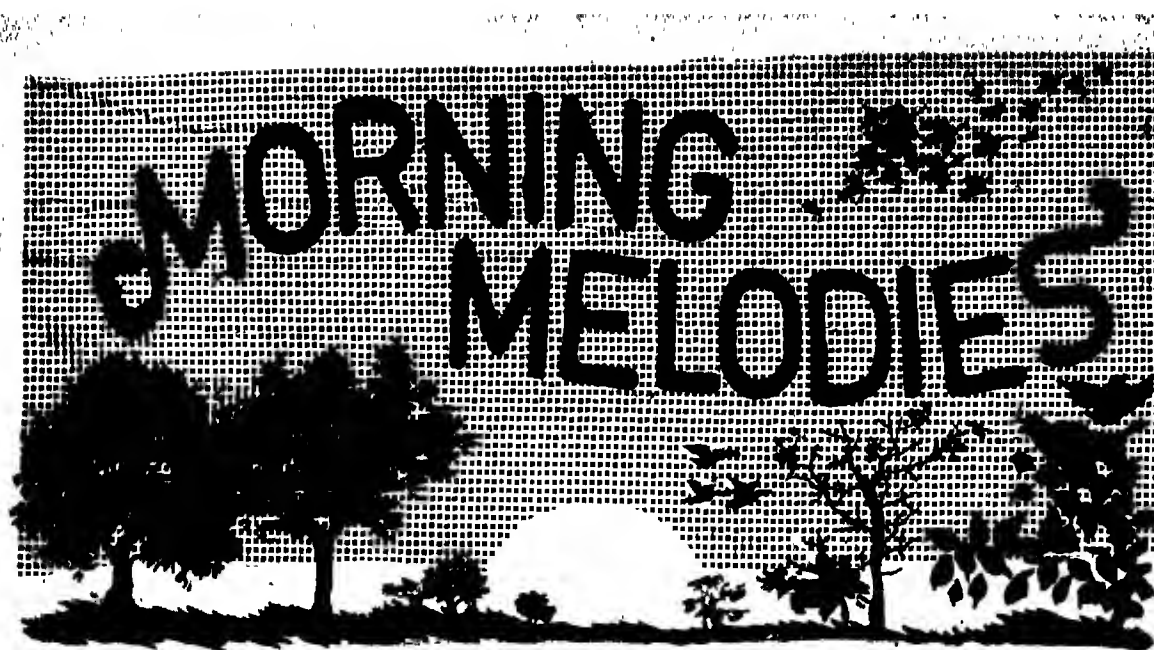
Rinki's mother was watching the whole drama from the doorway. She first hugged her daughter and then picked up the little dog and hugged him.

"Panna, you've saved my daughter's life," she said, with tears flowing down her cheeks.

Rinki, too, sat down and patted her Panna. Yes, there were tears flowing down her cheeks, too. If her mother's tears were those of gratitude towards the dog, hers were of happiness. Rinki knew that Panna had passed his final test.

Roena Singh





THE prince was sleeping yet. Standing near his bed, the maids played soft music. Before long the prince opened his eyes.

A tale from the Arabian Nights? The scene comes to my mind from an old movie. I have forgotten everything about it except this bit—a cameo of the luxury of bygone days.

Well, for some time I, too, have been waking up like that. Not in a princely bed, but on my *charpai* (string cot). And the music is not which any maids would play. It is the song of birds at dawn.

There is a low murmur. I sense it even as I sleep. The sound comes again. I open my eyes and look round. The room is dark and I see nothing. That sound comes again. It is the twitter of a sparrow outside the room.

I close my eyes and listen. Two or three sparrows have joined the lone one. The way their chirping comes in through the half-open window shows

that they are in the bead tree that stands in front. The sound is so sweet in the cool, quiet darkness. As I listen. I feel drowsy and it becomes a murmur again.

Then I find myself staring. There is a hint of light in the darkness. More sparrows are twittering now. The chorus swells every few seconds. It seems that all the sparrows that had slept around are, in two and threes, coming to the bead tree.

I have half a mind to go out to the balcony. But the thought of the chill air holds me under the quilt. I picture to myself the bead tree. Dark and bare, it is alive with sparrows, chirping, fluttering, hopping from one branch to another.

A crow caws. The cry is somehow not harsh. It comes again. It is not unpleasant. However, it does not blend with the chorus. Like a male voice, it floats apart from the girlish singsong of the small birds.

Above the twittering comes the call of a dove. It has a deep, sombre note, of fear and warning perhaps. A pair nests somewhere around. The crow has obviously startled them. Has it come to steal their eggs?

"May we join you?" two or three mynahs seem to be asking. As if they have got a "yes" from the choir, they start chattering. They are quite lively, though a little out of tune. If they go on, they might begin to chirp in unison.

It is nearly half-light. The air is keenly delicious. One could sip it like a cool drink.

A warbling rises amid the chirping. It is a bulbul that has just come there. No, there are two or three of them. They give a lilt to the music. The chorus comes rippling in now.

The mynahs are mixing better. The crow caws again. The sound still stands apart. But it is not the cry of a sly or greedy bird. The crow is strangely nice. "Good, good," he seems to be telling the chirping lot.

But the doves have their doubts yet. To them the crow is only a hungry egg thief. It might sound nice, and yet be a villain. So they coo again and again. Their calls are like short, fitful blasts of warning sounded on a half-choked trumpet.

"Cheer up," the bulbuls seem to be saying. "Forget the crow."

Has it worked? The doves are quiet.

The chorus is all joy and liveliness now. It is a flood of sweet, fluent sounds. It fills my room. It spills all around.

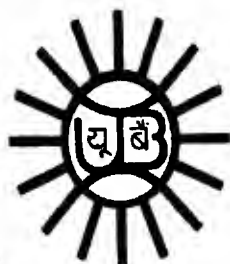
O.P. Bhagat

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*"Building a castle in the sand?"*

*"No, your guess is wrong. Perhaps you are building a castle in the air."*

*"Then, what're you up to?"*

*"Well, watch me closely. First dig a pit. Let it be a long, deep pit, where you can cradle yourself for sometime. Then..."*



*"But where are you? Come, everybody! my friend has vanished!"*

*"HANDS UP!"*

*"Who? Where? My own invisible ————"*



*"Here I am! Don't you believe me?"*

*"Oh, I'll give anything for a smile."*

*"Okay, now dig in your pockets, all of you. Mind you, I'm not alone. There, my friends! One, two, three, four..."*

*"Thank you That's not bad, there's enough for a sandwich if not a castle!"*

**(Photographs by Khurram Amrohi)**

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APRIL 1983

# A BABOON CALLED BUBU



**T**HERE was an island named Majaru. It was green with trees surrounded by a wide yellow beach where the blue sea waves came tumbling one after the other. Majaru was filled with animals, and they all lived in peace like friends.

Except for one baboon, called Bubu. He never smiled, nor played with anyone, and kept his thick, bushy eyebrows knotted in a frown. All the animals were afraid of him.

Especially because Bubu had a very bad habit of snatching things. He did so just for the fun of it. He was forever shouting, "Give me this", or "Give me that". But being in a hurry to snatch them, he used to say 'Gimme'. For this reason, he was called Gimme by all the animals of the island.

One day, Pupu the parrot was very happy. She had tied a new red ribbon in a big bow round her head.

"From where did you get it?" asked Ila, the elephant.

"My aunt, who lives across the sea, presented it to me," said Pupu.

"That's a lovely ribbon!" said Mimi the monkey.

Soon, there was quite a crowd admiring Pupu and her ribbon.

"Let me have a look!" wailed Ani, the ant, who had fallen behind everyone. So, Pupu sat on a branch above their heads so that everyone could see.

In the excitement, no one had noticed Bubu, who had also come there.

"Gimme the ribbon," said Bubu and suddenly snatched it before Pupu could fly away to a safe place.

"Please return my ribbon!" wailed Pupu, but Bubu would not listen.

Though the animals felt sorry for Pupu, no one dared to take the ribbon back from Bubu.

When he awoke the next morning, Bubu found to his surprise that he had grown an extra hand from his shoulder. As he walked towards the sea for a bath, he felt the new hand weigh him down. But he did not mind. "Now I've three hands and can grab even more," he thought, very pleased with himself.

The monkeys, Mimi and Mina, were playing on the beach with Ila. 'Whoosh', went the skipping rope as the sisters swung it counting.

"One, Two, Three," Ila skilfully skipped with the count.

"One, Two, Three . . . Whoosh."

"One, Two, Three . . . Whoosh."

The three were enjoying themselves

giggling all the while. Bubu saw them and edged on silently.

"One, Two, Three . . . Whoosh!" the game went on.

Suddenly stretching all three hands,



Bubu said, "Gimme the rope," and snatched it away.

Mimi, Mina and Ila hurried to safety, behind the trees in the forest. From there they watched Bubu. He tried to skip, but he was so clumsy with his three hands that he tripped and fell down. This made him angry, and he flung the rope into the sea. Mimi, Mina, and Ila sadly watched the huge waves wash it away.

Next day, when Bubu got up from sleep, he saw that two more hands had grown from his sides. They made him still heavier and he walked more slowly. He, however, did not worry much about it. 'Now I've five hands and can grab even more,' he thought, very pleased with himself.

Bubu came upon the donkey brothers Duda and Dada. They were engrossed in a game of chess.

"Checkmate!" said Dada.

"You can't do that," said Duda, "the game has just begun!"

Meanwhile, Bubu had approached them unnoticed. "Gimme the chess-board," he shouted and snatched it away, disturbing the chess pieces. Poor Duda and Dada galloped away before Bubu could grab them, too.

"The day has begun well," thought Bubu, fondly patting the chess-board in his arms. As he walked towards the sea, he appeared to be getting heavier with every step. Looking about, he discovered to his alarm that he was growing more hands. There were two growing from either side of his hips; one from his stomach and another from his back like a tail. Yet another one appeared from under his chin. Bubu now had ten hands altogether! By this time

he had become so heavy that he could no longer stand. He fell down on the beach.

Sumi the stork was doing her morning gargle with sea water. She was extremely surprised to see Bubu had ten hands. She ran to tell everybody the news. Puppi was the first person she met.

"Gimme has ten hands!" Sumi told her.

Then she met Ila and informed her as well. "Gimme has ten hands!"

Puppi met Mimi and Mina. "Gimme has ten hands," she told them.

The news soon spread and all the animals came to take a look at Bubu. He lay on the beach, unable to move. The hot sun burnt his skin and made him thirsty.

Bubu had hands everywhere! He had hands on his hips and so he could not lie on his sides. Hands on his back and stomach prevented him from lying on his back or stomach as well. Besides, the hands were always twitching, itching to snatch things and he could not control them.

He twisted and turned, groaned and moaned. A teardrop trickled from his eye, down his cheek, and fell on the sand. Bubu was crying! Seeing him cry, the animals of the island realised that something must really be wrong with Bubu. They gathered courage and came near him. Seeing them, Bubu said, "Help me, please! I can't move!"

The animals were filled with pity. "How do we save him?" asked Ila.

"Let's go to Doctor Kamu," said Puppi. "He might be able to help us."

They hurried to Kamu the camel. He

went with them immediately and examined Bubu with his stethoscope.

"Gimmicilitis!" he said, shaking his head sadly. "He's suffering from gimmicilitis."

"What is that, Doctor?" asked Dada.

"It's a disease caused by saying 'Gimme' all the time," said Kamu.

Everyone nodded understandingly.

"Can I be cured?" Bubu asked sorrowfully.

"Yes," said Doctor Kamu, "if you promise never to say 'Gimme' and never to snatch or grab things."

"I promise," said Bubu.

Doctor Kamu then gave him an injection and asked Korba the crab to snip off his eight extra hands. Korba set to work immediately, and Bubu was soon left with just two hands, like all baboons.

From that day onwards, Bubu stopped snatching things. Whenever he wanted anything, he would say, "Please give me that!"

So no one called him 'Gimme' anymore. Besides, he stopped frowning and started smiling instead. Everyone loved to play with Bubu the baboon.

Shukhamoy Bhattacharjee





*Dear all and sun-dry and moon-wash.*

Here I am! Where do you think I had gone? Ha — not even Mandrake can puff me away.

Tell you something? I was very, very disappointed that none of you really took the trouble of looking for me.

I thought there would be posters at least—on every second lamp post.

And I thought there would be police cars with flashing blue lights screaming down the roads, looking for me. And radio messages, and newspaper reports, and . . . oh well.

I tell you, all the lamp posts in the world are being wasted.

Raghu and I are now collecting mud. Sorry—that should read—Raghu and I are collecting earth samples. You see, both of us want to be explorers, and this is what all explorers do. Some explorers are, of course, lucky—they go to Antarctica or to the moon—and collect mud—sorry—earth samples. (Hey, how does the moon have earth samples? Must ask Raghu that). Anyway, we are starting off with collecting samples from our gardens, the school

garden, and neighbours' gardens—and the road, of course. When Raghu puts all these places into a bunch, he calls it the 'surrounding areas of NW 12'. When I asked him what NW 12 meant, he was very angry. "Can't you make out? What is N in geography?"

"Norway?" I asked hopefully. (I was teasing him, actually). He looked furious.

"Netherlands," I tried again.

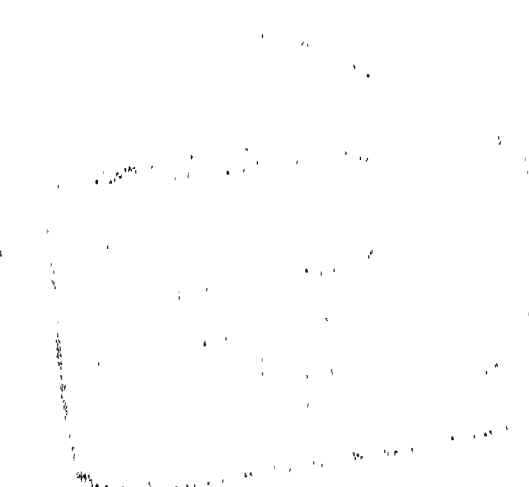
He started swelling.

"Nigeria?"

He burst. "You nattering, numbskulled, no-brained, knuckleheaded nitwit," he thundered. "That's what N stands for."

"Except," I said sweetly, "that knuckleheaded does not begin with an N—or perhaps it does for you."

Anyway, let me not describe all the fights we have—Raghu and I. It always ends with us trying to bash up each other and then the mothers come and you know the rest of it.



So, we collect earth samples and keep them in white envelopes. We are very scientific about it all. We label each of them very correctly.

We have many envelopes, all with different earth samples, and keep them on my desk in a row. Of course, they

do take up some space and make a mess, but as Raghu says, science has to make a lot of sacrifices. The reason Raghu doesn't keep them on his desk is that nattering, numbskulled, knuckleheaded, sorry knuckleheaded, nosey-parker sister of his. She is the biggest spoilsport in the world, or on the earth if you like.

After collecting and labelling these earth specimens (note—not samples), we try and observe any similarity or dissimilarity in the various specimens thus collected! (I am copying this sentence from a science book). That means, we try and see what difference there is between, for example, the mud in our garden and the one from Raghu's garden. There is usually not much. Mud is after all mud anywhere you go. Once I found a piece of broken bangle in one of the packets and I got very excited.

"It might be Mohenjo-daro," I called out.

"What Mohenjo-daro?" asked Raghu. "You know that place with the pots and pans and big tanks? We've read about it in history."

"Oh history!" yawned Raghu. "Who cares about history? That bit of bangle must be from one of Baby's friends. They are always wearing those things and breaking them."

There you are—that's Raghu for you. The keen scientist, always ready to use his brains for any scientific discovery and to dirty his hands, too, but no imagination at all. Just the opposite of me in fact, who is (should that be—who am?) full of "imagination, and stirring poetry that thrills your mind and fires your heart" (I am copying this from the back cover of one of my father's books, but it describes me pretty well, doesn't it?) Here I am with this bit of bangle, which must have once adorned the tiny

wrist of a little girl, dressed in long, flowing robes, who played a lute—did they have lutes in Mohenjo-daro, I wonder — and

"Hey you, wake up!"

That's Raghu. No imagination, as I told you.

"Let's go and collect some specimens from that government office."

So you can picture us, lads and lassies, trudging off with envelopes and our fingers, the busy scientist and his dreamy writer-cum-poet-cum-thriller of

minds-cum-firer of hearts—you can picture us if you, like me, have imagination, you can picture us against the lonely sky walking, walking, walking across the road and to the government office.

Bye

*Perky*

P.S. I'd like letters to me. Why bother the Editor? He even otherwise gets stacks and bags of them. So, address your letters to me.

# JUST THAT

--By Sanjay Balu

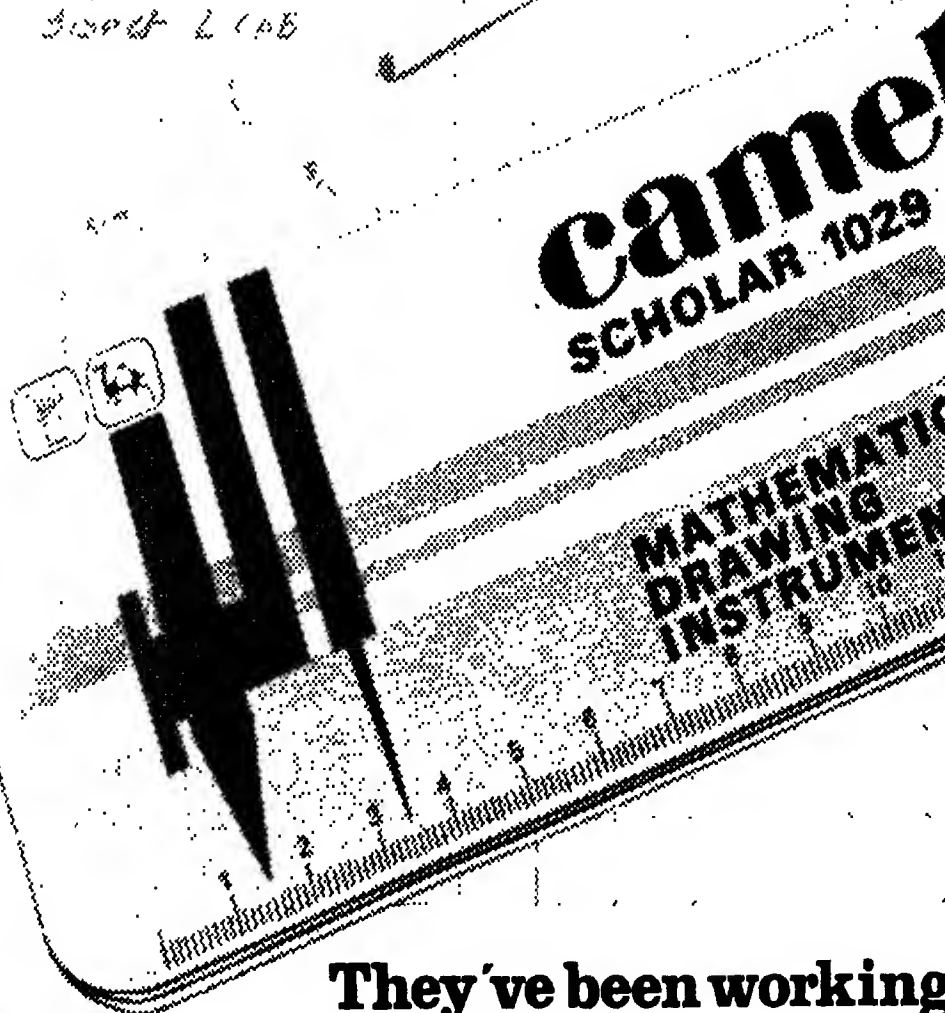


Generation gap!

The poor crows have mistaken him for a statue!

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### THE STORY SO FAR

Examinations are over, and Biju and Pratap heave a sigh of relief. As they plan a movie programme, 'police' Appu joins them. He had earned the nick-name after he had, like a daredevil, succeeded in separating two ruffians while they grappled with each other in front of their school. Appu rightly guesses, the idea of a quiet movie must have come from P. Pratap (as he is popularly known among his friends, from the day he wet his pants, though he was then only a student of Class I). He has a more manly suggestion: why not remind their master, Rajasekhar, of his promise to take them on a picnic? Their classmates Smitha, Vinita, Gopi, and John approve enthusiastically, and they all troop in to the Staff room. Rajasekhar accedes to their request, but where would they like to go? Smitha's

choice is the Dam. But that is rather far away. Some place nearer, says their master. Appu suggests Kali Hills. But who will want to go there even in broad daylight? Rajasekhar mentions Koickal Palace, and there is general agreement. He also promises to get hold of the school bus and asks the children to meet him again the next morning to finalise the programme.

Back home, Pratap is disappointed as his mother is away shopping and he can't ask her what she will prepare for him for the picnic. He turns down his sister Beena's offer to make him tea, and goes to Appu's place, where his mother promises hot 'vadas'. Pratap later forgets his tiff with Beena, as he and his mother agree upon bananas for the picnic.

## CHAPTER II : Koickal Palace

THE next morning everyone in Pratap's class had assembled.

"I'm glad all of you have come," said Rajasekhar. "But how many of you are joining the picnic?"

Renu said she might not, as she was going with her parents to her grandmother's place. Her cousin, Arun, also opted out. All the others were ready to go.

"The Headmaster has agreed to give us the school bus. Miss Sarada and I will be in charge."

The announcement was greeted with cheers. The children liked their Sarada teacher. She could sing very well.

"Now, have you asked your mothers what they would prepare for the picnic?"

A number of voices spoke at the same time. The children reeled out a list of items.

"Wait, wait. Let me take down the list, and then we'll decide." Mr. Rajasekhar took out a piece of paper and noted down the items each of them mentioned.

"No," he said finally, "we don't need so much. And you must not trouble your mothers too much. Only ten of you need bring items. Let's make a shorter list."

When the list was ready, he read it out and said, "Those of you who are not bringing anything on their own can help the others. Of course, I'll bring my camera."

"And I'll carry my violin," said Sarada, who was till then merely watching the proceedings.

"It's all settled. So, be here by 8 on Sunday. Let's hope we'll have a nice time."

The children were singing and jumping with joy, as they went back home. They felt as if the picnic had already started.

Sunday morning. The boys and girls assembled at the school well before time. Several of them carried baskets and shoulder bags containing eatables, and water bottles. One of the boys brought a football

and a girl a skipping rope. Shalini had taken her painting kit, and Sandeep did not forget his chessboard.

When the bus arrived, there was a scramble to get in and occupy the window seats. Rajasekhar stood at the door. "Form a queue and get in one by one," he insisted.

A queue was formed immediately. The children got in, their faces showing displeasure over the insistence on discipline even on a holiday.

The journey started. The first two kilometres formed the village road. After that came a long stretch of paddy fields. The bus went along the metalled road in the middle of the fields. Beyond, coconut groves could be seen on either side. Harvesting had started. Men and women stood in rows, cutting the paddy with their sickles. They were singing a beautiful song, with rhythm kept by the movements of their hands and feet.

Pratap knew that song—a beautiful piece of lyric in praise of the scenic beauty of Kerala, its mountains and lush green forests, its paddy fields and coconut groves, its rivers and backwaters. He began humming loudly and soon the others joined him. Before they knew what was happening, both Rajasekhar and Sarada too joined the chorus.

The children were now in a world of their own. They forgot about their classes and examinations. They soon left the paddy fields behind them. The road now ran parallel to river Pampa. It was shallow as it was summer. Through the crystal clear water, they could see the river bed of white sand. The breeze from the river made it cool inside the bus.

It was only when the bus came to a halt that they realised, they were already in front of the Koickal Palace. They could not believe that they had been sitting in the bus for about an-hour-and-a-half. They had enjoyed the journey thoroughly.

Koickal was a sprawling palace. It covered more than a half hectare of land. Legend had it that there were nearly fifty rooms, several of them like halls. The palace was surrounded by an eight-feet high wall. There were two huge gates, at the front and back. The gates had iron bars with sharp tops like spears. On either side of the front gate stood two granite elephants. They looked so life-like that people were invariably afraid to go

near them!

The palace was believed to have been built in the 17th century in record time. A long and fierce battle raged nearby between the soldiers of the Rajahs of Travancore and Kayamkulam. The Maharajah of Travancore decided to lead his side himself and got the palace constructed for his use during the war. People said it had also an escape tunnel. Most parts of the palace



SUDIA

were in ruins now, though the frontage remained intact. The palace was a protected monument.

"We'll now go inside the palace. See that none of you stray away. Keep to the group," Rajasekhar cautioned them before he led them into the palace. Inside, the floor was broken at several places. In the poor light, they all had to struggle to avoid falling down.

The huge walls and the massive decorated doors were awe-inspiring. Some children tried to move the doors. They could not. The doors were so heavy.

One room which attracted them most was the old armoury. There were swords, spears, and shields of different sizes. Also some guns and daggers. Some had rusted, but most of them were well maintained.

The absence of large windows and ventilators surprised the children, but their teacher explained, that was because of the need for safety and security during the war.

Any little sound they made met with a loud echo inside the palace. It was Appu who thought of an experiment: he began with a small howl. He was not sure what the two teachers might say. But they did not seem to care. So more and more of them howled and hooted. The echoes seemed to come from every direction.

There were rooms and rooms and rooms. It seemed an endless expedition. It was almost midday by the time they all came out.

"Let's eat now. We'll go to the park," said Rajasekhar.

They were just waiting for the orders! They collected their bags and baskets from the bus and ran towards the park, between the palace and the river.

Unlike the palace, the park was very well looked after. There were a number of huge-trees protecting the whole place from the sun. And all around there were flowers of

different shapes and colours. There were also plants cut in the shape of animals.

The children gathered under a tree. They spread the catables before them, and ate to their heart's content. Evidently they were all very hungry.

Meanwhile Rajasekhar got busy with his camera, taking shots of the children, and of their surroundings. After the meal, they lay on the grass for a while. Sarada teacher played on the violin for some time. Little Vinita, who had a sweet voice, sang a few songs. Pratap wondered why Sarada preferred to be a teacher and not become a musician.

"Now you may roam about in the garden. But come back exactly in an hour. We'll then go back," went the authoritative voice of Rajasekhar. The children soon spread out to different corners of the park.

On the eastern side, the park gradually merged into the forest. It grew thicker and thicker. The mountain ranges also began from there. Appu, Pratap, Biju, and John walked towards the forest. It was quite dark there. The sun could not enter anywhere there because of the thick foliage.

"We shouldn't go further inside. Master will be angry," said John.

"Hey, we can see the Kali hills from here. Come! Come!" shouted Biju from another corner.

"Where? Where?" the other three ran up to him.

Through a gap between the trees, they could see the hill and at the top, the Kali temple.

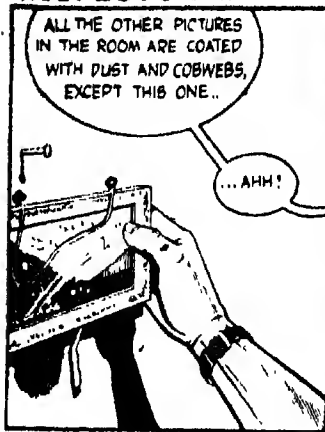
"Why are people so scared of the Kali hills?" asked John.

"Don't you know? I'll tell you the story," said Pratap.

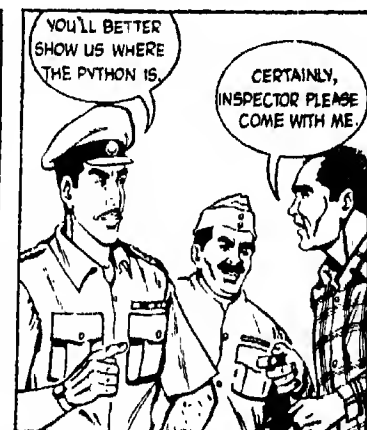
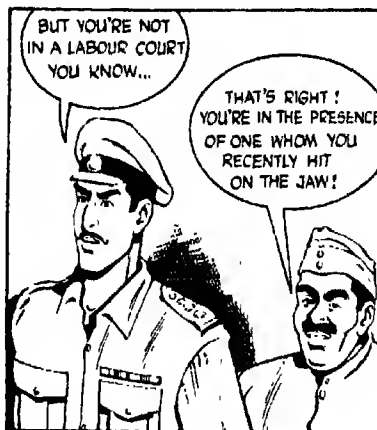
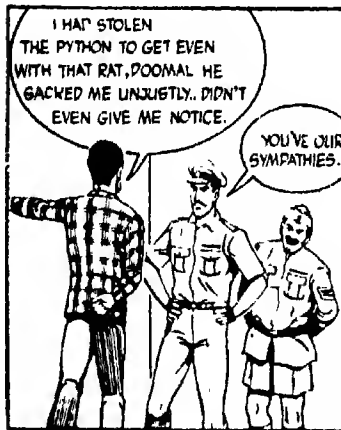
They sat down in a line facing Pratap.

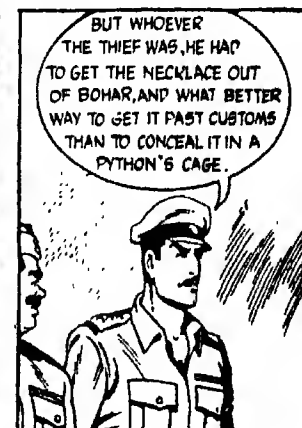
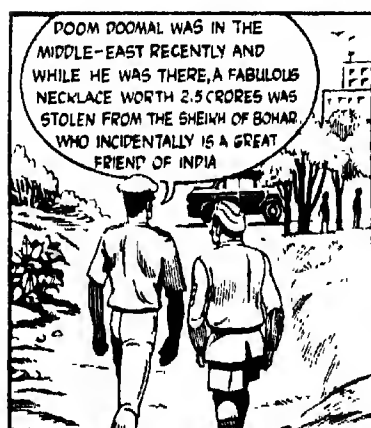
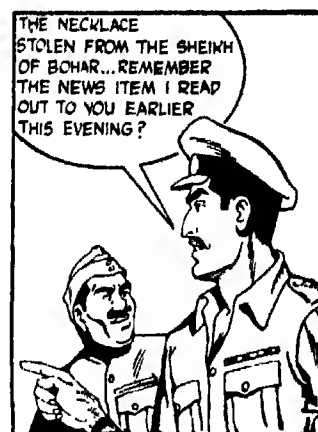
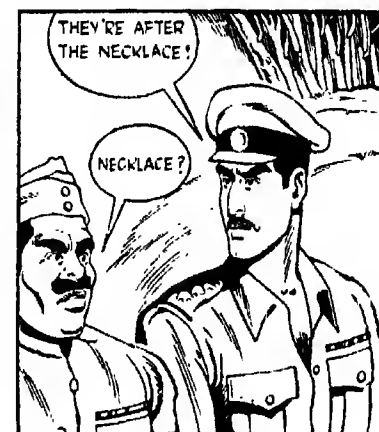
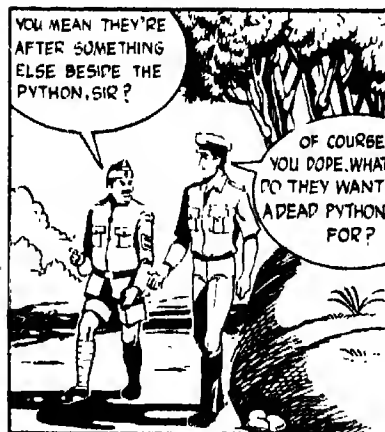
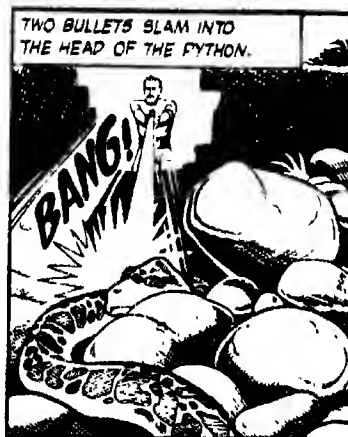
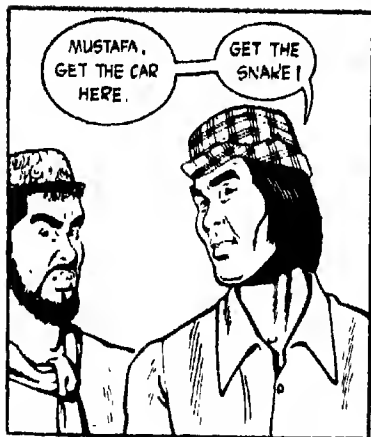
**Radhakrishnan**

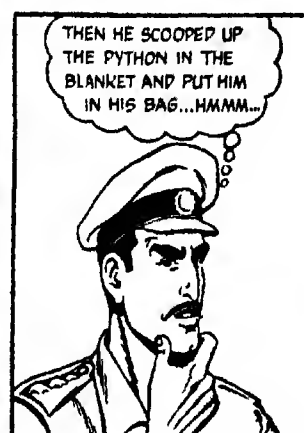
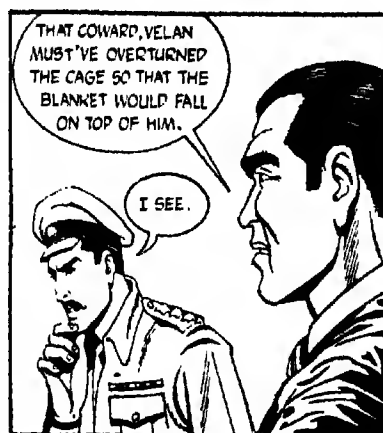
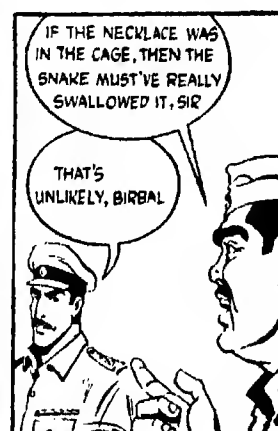
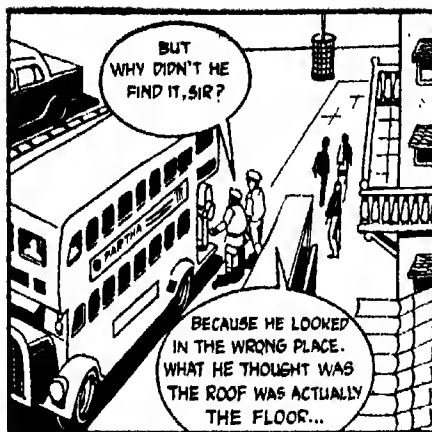


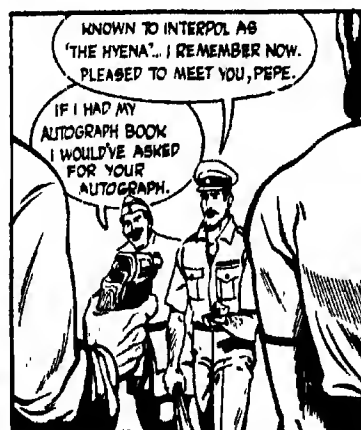
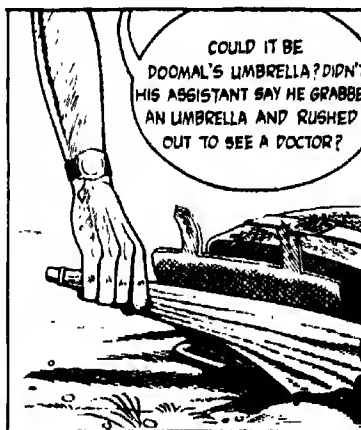
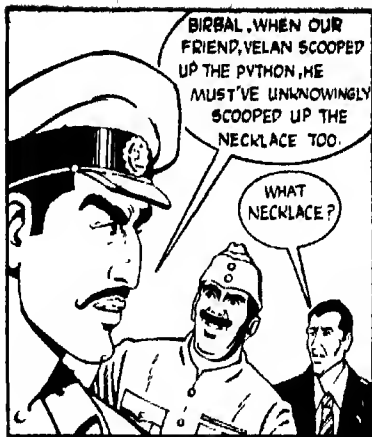


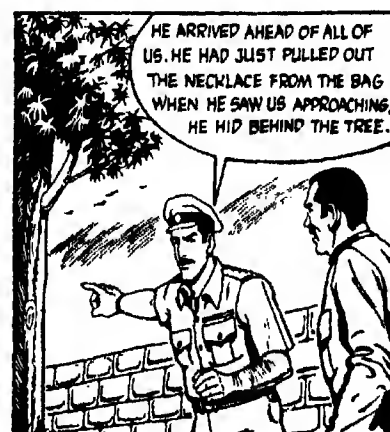
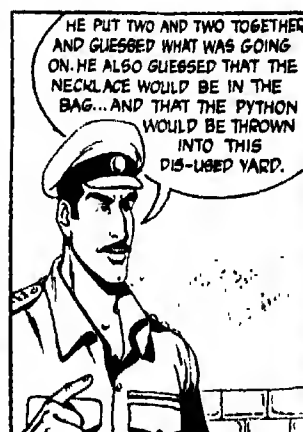
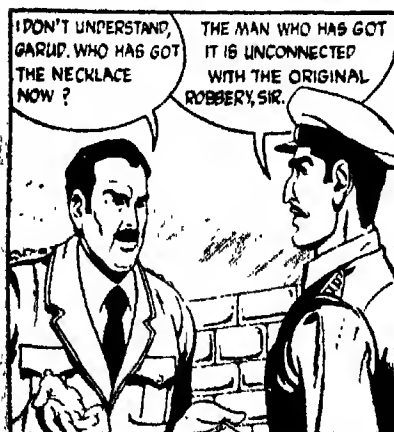
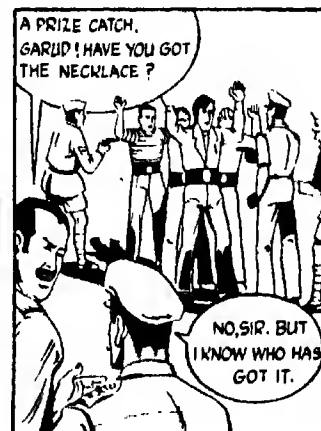
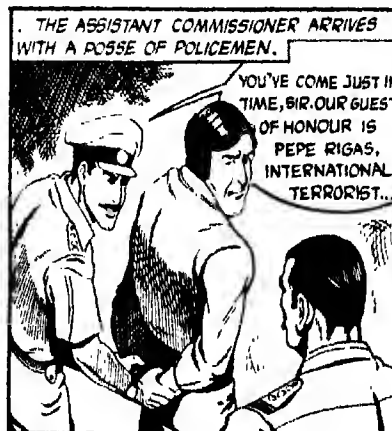
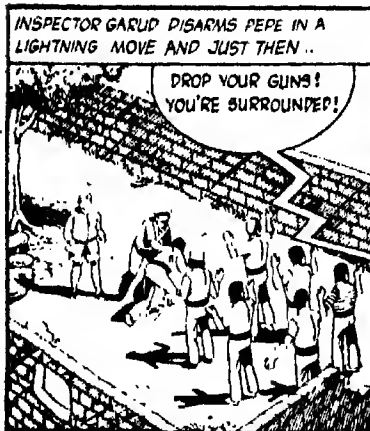
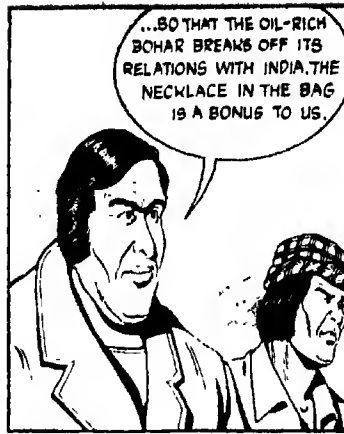
...AHH!



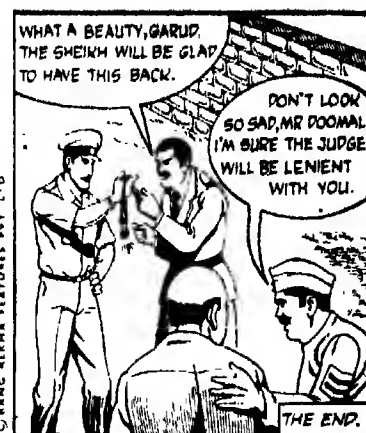












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in America in the 1890s were ridiculed in the newspapers as "CRAZY"

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**THE PRINCIPAL**  
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competed in the 42-km Engadine cross-country race held in a blizzard in 1981 at St. Moritz, Switzerland and it was won by Bill Koch, who in 1982 also won the first Nordic World Cup cross-country ski title — **THE ONLY AMERICAN TO WIN BOTH OF THESE PRESTIGIOUS EVENTS!**

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**THE ENTRANCE**  
to a cave in Giant City, IL, is similar to the shape of the State of Illinois  
Submitted by Joseph T. Mohar, Lindenhurst, IL

**GARY WATSON**  
a bus driver of Overbrook, PA, has had himself photographed with over 3,800 celebrities — including TV stars, musicians, politicians — even 3 U.S. Presidents  
Submitted by Ed Matukonis, Fort LaPorte, PA

# Getting Closer to Nature

WHEN a viper fell down from a tree and on to a tent at Manali, it created a lot of excitement among the children camping there.

As word about the presence of the poisonous snake spread, curious, awed, and slightly scared children inched their way around the reptile. The camp doctor showed them how to catch a deadly snake without being bitten. Turn by turn they held it in their hands.

"Oh! How smooth and soft it is, not scaly and hard as I had thought it would be," was the reaction of most of the children.

The snake was then put in a cloth bag, which was slung at the end of the a long stick. The viper was thus carried to a lower camp where another group of children were camping.

Here the snake was shaken out of the bag. Shy, probably scared of the

ring of human beings around it, the viper just lay on the ground without moving. The camp doctor demonstrated again to this new group how to handle a snake. "Catch it by its neck, so that it gets no opportunity to dig its fangs into you," he told them.

True to the spirit of the World Wildlife Fund — India, which was organising the camps with the help of the Ministry of Education, the viper was not killed. It was put back into the cloth bag and the children carried it to a dense forest where it was let loose, to live.

The children had learnt a very important lesson: not to kill or harm an animal, however deadly, if they could help it.

The World Wildlife Fund — India has been organising nature orientation camps for the last seven years. The

*The Bombay group in typical Himachali dress.*





*At the Rohtang pass.*

camps, held during vacations, are for children and young adults in the age group 10-25 years. The camps aim at developing among the young participants a love for nature and wildlife.

The camps are held in beautiful surroundings, in different parts of the country. Children from all over the country who are members of the Nature Clubs of India, a WWF organisation, are eligible to attend.

Each Nature Club is required to have a minimum of ten members who may either be from a school, college, or students residing in the same neighbourhood. There are at present 350 Nature Clubs, with a membership of 12,000 children. Almost all the members have attended such nature camps.

In Manali last year, there was a group of children from Sikkim, Madras, Bombay, Baroda, Pune, and Rajkot.

Three camp sites at different altitudes were selected for setting up the tents.

After a few days stay at one site, the group would move on to the higher camp, while a fresh batch of students came and occupied the first camp site.

The first camp was in an apple orchard adjacent to a gurgling mountain stream. The second was on the banks of the river Beas. The third was near the Rohtang Pass, where tall pine trees grew and it snowed.

The camps meant two-weeks of fun-packed nature study. They were supervised by one of the WWF consultants, Mr. Lavkumar Khacher. He knows a lot about plants and animals and has been a school teacher for decades, but does not believe in just classroom education.

The children went for long walks, taking in the mountain beauty, trying to identify the plants and birds they came across. They trekked through the mountains to reach a remote village, where someone had a monal pheasant





*Above: Tents at the 2nd camping site at Manali.  
Below: At the Third camp site near the Rohtang Pass, a day after a heavy snowfall.*



*Above: Rappelling at Manali. Below: Chalking out the day's schedule.*



*Below: Activities at the Manali camp.*



*Below: Lunch time.*



for a pet. They were taught how to climb rocks, how to come down a steep mountain, and how to cross a river by walking through it with the help of a rope.

Mohan, a 14-year-old boy from Madras, after his two-week stay, became an authority on the mountain birds. He could identify them on sight and had spent hours observing their habits.

Thirteen-year-old Shobha from Bombay, on her first night at the camp, remarked, "I've never seen so many stars in my life. They look so close, and it looks as though I just have to stretch my hand to grab some." She wanted to stay awake the whole night underneath the starlit sky. Only the thought of a long trek scheduled for the next day could make her go to bed.

And 'bed' was a few blankets spread on the bare earth inside a tent. It was biting cold, but who cared!

It was fun to bathe in the icy mountain stream, to wash clothes and utensils in it. It was pure delight to gulp down water from a natural spring. "It

tastes so fresh," said Babita from Sikkim.

Meals were taken together underneath a tent. One night, it rained so fiercely that all the children got wet. But food had never tasted better.

And most nights, whenever the weather permitted, a camp fire was lit. The children sat around singing. Even the camp cooks, men from Kulu and Manali, joined in, thrilling their young audience with haunting melodies in their language.

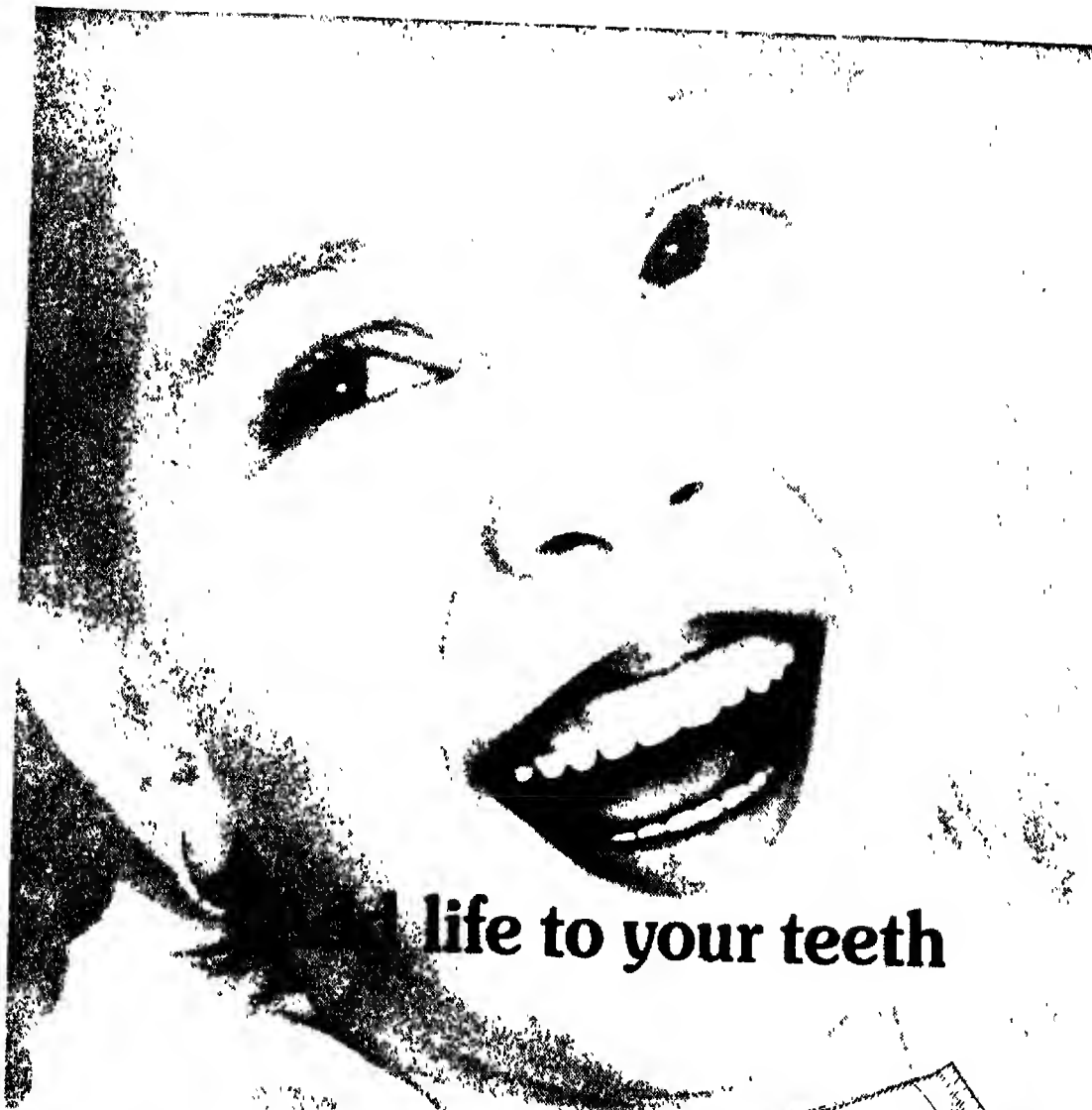
When the two weeks came to an end, everyone was sorry to leave. Most of them promised themselves that they would come for the next camp. And all of them went back wiser and determined to do their bit to improve the environment in their cities.

Sheero

**P.S. Details about Nature Clubs can be obtained from the Education Officer, World Wildlife Fund—India, c/o Godrej and Boyce Mfg. Co. Ltd., Lalbaug, Parel, Bombay 400012.**

*Crossing the Beas with the help of a rope.*





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**Y**OU have heard of man-made islands. But have you ever heard of animal-made islands? Coral polyps are the architects of thousands of such islands. Do you know how these islands came to be?

Reef-building corals are found in warm seas where the temperature is between 23° and 25°C. If the temperature decreases beyond 18°C, life then becomes impossible for them. Hence these reef-building corals are found only in tropical seas. They grow only in shallow waters. Reef-building corals are not seen below 40 metres depth. "The Great Barrier Reef" of Australia is the largest coral reef in the world. It is 1,260 miles in length.

These little animals convert the calcium salts in sea water into hard calcareous rocks. When these rocks become dry like land, plants grow over them.

The stony, Madriporian corals are chiefly responsible for such reef-building. A soft, tiny part, the polyp, dwells inside the calcareous skeleton. Through

the openings of the skeleton, the flower-like polyps emerge and withdraw. Among these corals, the simplest type has only one polyp. But a majority of the reef-building corals have colonial forms. A colony consists of a large number of individuals. It looks like a shrub (Fig. 1). The skeletons of these animals fuse together and form stony rocks. You often see corals preserved in museums. Actually, they are only the skeleton part of the coral.

Umbrella-shaped minute medusae are liberated from the adult polyp. When the medusae become full grown, the eggs and sperms swim with their cilia for sometime. By then they also find a suitable substratum to settle down. The cup-shaped polyp develops from it. From the first polyp, numerous polyps develop like a branch and finally obtain the shape of a tree.

In some corals, the full grown polyp divides into two. But it does not separate. This process is repeated several times and finally it attains the shape of

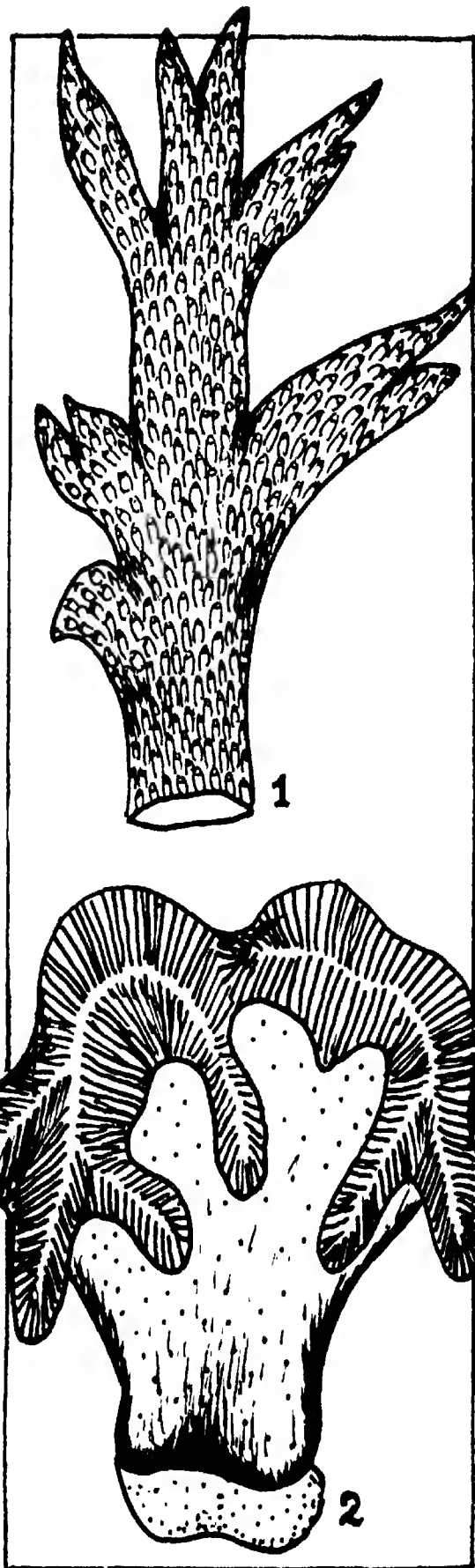
a human brain. As the depressions, with which the surface is covered, resemble very closely the convolutions on the surfaces of the human brain, it is known as Brain Coral (Fig. 2).

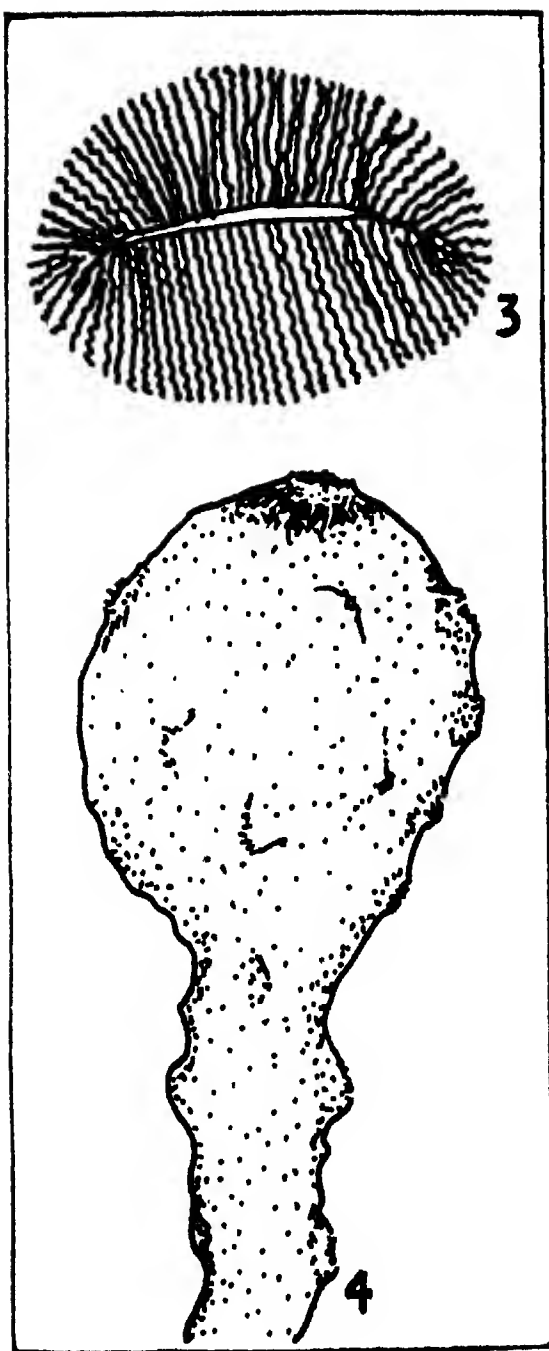
A solitary type of coral is common on reefs. The larva settles down and develops into the cup-shaped polyp. When the polyp matures, the tip of the polyp swells up. This looks like a mushroom. It is popularly known as Mushroom Coral (Fig. 4). After some time, the swollen portion falls off and is washed away to some other places. There it settles down and grows into a new plant. The old remaining portion of the polyp again develops a new swelling and the process is repeated.

The small microscopic animals, known as the zooplankton, form food for them. At the free end of the polyp there are small finger-like protrusions—the tentacles. With the help of the soldiers, the nematocysts, they capture their prey and put it into their mouths. They grow about one-and-a-half inches in one year, though the actual rate of growth is not correctly known.

The corals mentioned above belong to the group sea anemones. They build coral reefs. Other types of corals have slight differences in their growth. They have a large central polyp with mouth and stomach. Surrounding this are about six or seven polyps without either a mouth or stomach. These small polyps catch prey, kill it, and put it into the mouth of the central polyp. Thus the process of feeding takes place. This coral has the ability to sting and paralyze even man for sometime. Because of its stinging nature, it is known as the 'Stinging Coral'.

The best known, of course, is the Red Coral (Fig. 3). Red coral or ruby is one of the nine precious gems. It is





different from the true reef-building corals. It is not generally found in the tropical seas or shallow waters but in the deeper areas of temperate regions. It belongs to the group 'sea fan'. Even though the red coral is very soft inside the animal, it hardens once it is taken out of water.

From ancient times, this coral has

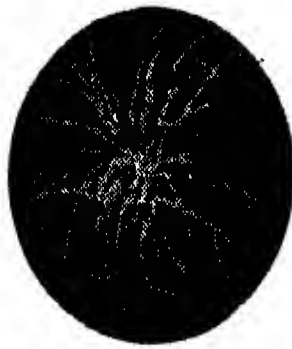
been valued by mankind. It is used as an ornament, and also as an antidote for poison. In eastern countries, the ruby is more valued as a jewel than the emerald. In the 18th century, physicians were widely using the ruby in their prescriptions. It is now a known fact that, chemically, the ruby is just like a piece of chalk. People once believed that it helped children to cut their teeth, hence the custom of giving little children necklaces of coral beads!

Red coral is found largely in the Mediterranean, off the south of France and around the coasts of Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily, and the northern coasts of Africa. A very similar red coral is found off the coasts of Japan.

In ancient literature we can find descriptions of black coral. This was also believed to have great medicinal value. Bracelets and necklaces made of black coral were worn in China, Japan, and the Malay Archipelago. In India, it was used as a cure for rheumatism and as a safeguard against drowning. It was widely found in the Mediterranean, Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf.

Corals die as a result of accumulation of silt and debris. They are also destroyed by seaweeds, boring bivalves, sea cucumbers, and certain types of fishes.

A living coral reef is a veritable sea garden. As corals are of different colours, like orange, green, pink, white, violet, brown, and yellow, they look like beautiful plants and flowers. Different types of beautifully coloured animals live in coral reefs, like butterflies in a garden. These 'butterflies' are actually large tube worms with brilliantly coloured tentacles, large sea cucumbers, innumerable crustaceans, crabs, shrimps, a variety of molluscs, sponges, and beautifully coloured fishes.



## SEA FLOWERS

Sea flowers or sea anemones are the most beautiful animals among all the creatures of the sea. A sea flower, when it stretches its tentacles and body, looks like a beautiful flower. They belong to the phylum *coelenterata* and the class *Anthozoa*. The word 'Anthos' in Greek means 'flowers' and hence the nickname "sea flowers".

Usually, they attach themselves to the substratum, and sometimes to other animals also. It has a cylindrical body. Some are shaped like a pot (Fig. 5). They are seen in different colours, and also found in different sizes depending on the species (Fig. 6). The part attached to the substratum is called "foot". The mouth is situated in the centre of the free end of the body. Around the mouth, the long and slender finger-like "tentacles" are arranged in rows. The tentacles are encircled like the petals of a sunflower. Its beauty and pretty colour attract small animals and they are trapped by the tricky fellow.

A large number of nematocysts—stinging cells—are entombed in their tentacles. These nematocysts are manufactured within the epithelial cells, each of which consists of an ovoid capsule containing a coiled thread (Fig. 7 A). The thread is rolled and arranged inside-out into the capsule (Fig. 7 B).

There are different types of nemato-

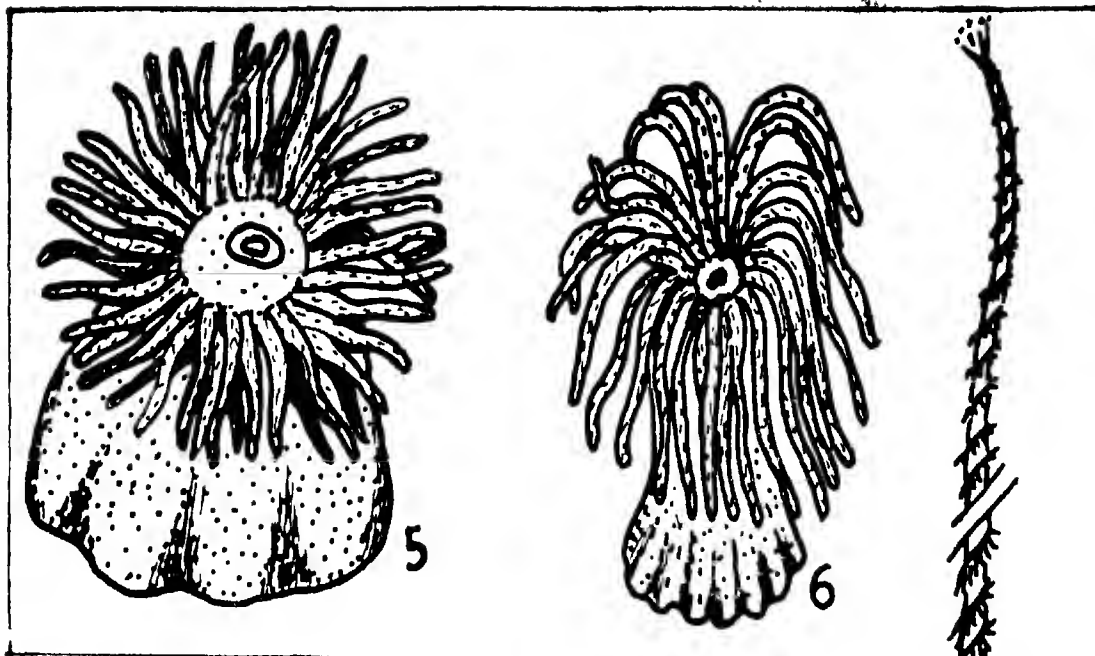
cysts. Some are specialized to attach the animal to the substratum and the others for killing or defence. When any object comes to the animal, the capsule, suddenly permeable, develops a high pressure inside. It then abruptly turns inside-out into a thread entangling the unfortunate little creature.

Many nematocysts complete their discharge by extruding a drop of poison from the tip of the thread. They are tiny—not more than a millimetre in length. Still, when they work together, they can immobilize surprisingly large animals. The food is then put inside the mouth. After sometime, the body of the animal contracts and the undigested waste materials are thrust out.

The sea anemone changes its size and shape by imbibing water. The way it gets back to shape after contraction is more complicated. They have only a thin layer of mesoglea, and this is not enough to maintain the animal's shape. The anemone, on contraction, throws out most of the water inside through the mouth, and has to pump itself again in order to expand. This is achieved by myriads of cilia at the side of the mouth. They force water into the animal. It is all a laborious process and takes about an hour to finish. Once it is pumped up, the animal remains more or less rigid. The cilia maintain the pressure, the water inside the anemone performing the function of the skeleton. A contracting muscle displaces the water inside the animal. After expanding the body, it stretches the tentacles and moves its body, like the gentle movement of a plant. By this enchanting movement, little animals that come in the way are trapped inside.

Sea anemones don't have brains to control their functions and activities.



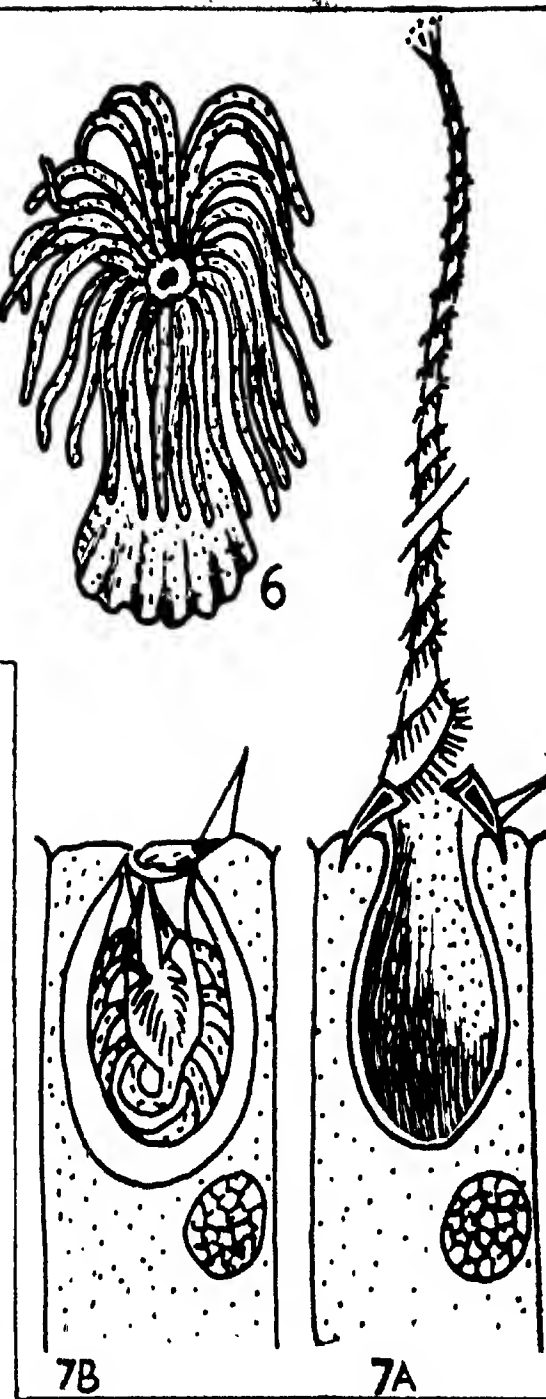


They have only a network of nerve fibres. With this, they are able to make out their surroundings.

Inside, the body is divided into many partitions (fold of peritonium attaching some part of the intestinal canal to the posterior wall of the abdomen). Some mesenteries extend from the base of the body to the top.

The male and female are separate individuals. The eggs and sperms are discharged in water and fertilization takes place outside the body. The planule, the larvae of the sea anemone, lives in the plankton and settles down on some substratum. Thus a small new sea flower begins its life.

Some of the sea anemones are colonial animals. They live inside the tube and dwell under the mud. These tube anemones are seen everywhere. They don't even find it difficult to live under highly polluted areas. Yet some of them



lead commensal lives with hermit crabs and other animals. These types lead an easy-going life.

V. Shanthakumari





**T**HOUGH he is not a beautiful bird, I love to watch the chimsy ungainly fellow on the tree and listen to the loud flap of his wings as he flies. He reminds me of the days when queer animals stalked the earth.

Can you guess what the real use of the big horn on his beak is? No one has, as yet.

Long ago, the Hornbill was known as the "Rhinoceros" bird, as he too has a horn on his nose!

He is a queer bird too, because when the father and mother have chosen a big hole in a tree for their nest, the mother stays in it all the time till the eggs are hatched and the babies are grown up enough to learn to fly. She plasters up the hole, leaving just a crack open, large enough to put out her beak to be fed.

What fun it must be in that nest all those weeks. No wonder the mother bird moults all her feathers and grows a new suit of pale grey. She wisely comes out of the nest a few days before her babies are ready to learn to fly, in order to grow her feathers and practise her paces first.

You can tell the age of the babies in the nest, if you look at the ground be-

low the nesting tree. Tiny plants would have begun to sprout from the seeds the mother had spat out. The father is industrious in bringing meals for her. He swallows figs and berries, and when he comes to feed his wife, he coughs it all up, presenting the food to her in a leathery bag. It is the lining of his gizzard which he grows again and again!

We all think food in capsules is a modern idea, but the old Hornbill has had that bright thought for centuries!

He is no fool either, for he loves his wife, and their devotion is respected, for other Hornbills won't use the home of their old friends after they are dead. I like that!

There are something like forty-five species of Hornbills in the world. The eight found in India are all arboreal and used to high temperatures! They are common in Northern U.P., the foothills of the Himalayas, and Bombay.

Two species, the Common Grey Hornbill '*Tockus birostris*' and the Malabar Pied Hornbill '*H. malabarica*' are widely distributed in India, and they deserve special mention.

The Common Grey Hornbill is about two feet long and, as the name

implies, is mostly grey in colour. The graduated tail is almost half the length of the bird. The crown is dark grey, with a light grey border, most noticeable at close quarters. The wings, too, are brownish, as is the tail which is tipped with white. The underparts are light grey, becoming almost white on the abdomen. The bill is curved and the casque (helmet) is blackish.

This species differs from the majority of others, in that it occurs not in deep forest but in the open plains, in avenues, and even in well-timbered compounds and in villages.

The Malabar Pied Hornbill is a big bird, about two-and-a-half feet long. The head, neck, back, and wings are black; so are the two central tail feathers. The black is everywhere glossed with green. The remainder of the plumage is pure white, including the tips. There is a bare yellowish patch on the chin, and in the female a bare white ring round the eye.

The bill is waxy yellow, as is the base of the casque for one-third of its length of eight inches, is black. Unlike the other larger representatives of the family, this Pied Hornbill is not a denizen of deep, moist, evergreen jungles, but of deciduous forest, in hilly country.

As a family, Hornbills possess several peculiarities. All have eye-lashes, an unusual feature in a bird's make-up. Most of them do not have the soft feathers under the wings. Therefore, their flight is noisy. They are remarkable for the enormous size of their beaks. These are surmounted by a large casque. But although the bill of a Hornbill looks so heavy and cumbersome, it is really quite light, as the interior is of a cellular structure. These cells probably act as resonators that enable the bird to



produce its exceptionally loud cry.

Hornbills do not chisel out holes in trees for nesting purposes. The female Hornbill, when the time comes for her to nest, enters a big natural cavity in the trunk of a large tree, and there, without any further attempt at nest construction, proceeds to lay her eggs—one or two. Her first egg laid, the male then makes his mate a prisoner by plastering up the entrance of the hole with a resin-like substance composed of his gastric juices and fruit pulp, which hardens on exposure to the air. A narrow slit is left open, through which the sitting hen can thrust her beak and receive the food provided by her partner. The food, which consists of berries, fruit, and insects, is presented in the form of ejected pellets, enclosed in a

bag of thin skin, from the male bird's gizzard.

When the young Hornbills come out of their eggs, and are two or three weeks old, the mother breaks open the wall of her temporary prison with her beak, and passes through the opening thus made. She closes up the hole once again, leaving her offspring in the nest. Only a narrow slit is left, and now both parents feed the youngsters, clamouring for food.

The incubation period is about thirty days for the Common Grey Hornbill. During her self-imposed imprisonment, the female undergoes a moult of at least her wings and tail feathers, and at one stage she is rendered quite flightless.

It has been observed that when the wall of the nest-hole is finally broken down for the young birds to fly away, they don't do so immediately. Several days may elapse before the young one emerges into the outer world. During this period, apparently the female will enter the nest to roost with the family at night.

It will be interesting to note that the mother Hornbill, while in the nest, is most careful with regard to sanitation; she either throws the droppings out or defecates outside the nest.

The young ones, too, are equally hygiene-conscious in this important matter, invariably defecating through the slit. The nest is always clean — no flies, no ants, no smell!

Hornbills become extraordinarily tame and affectionate in captivity. Blessed with an insatiable appetite, Hornbills in captivity have one fault, that they make a great deal of noise by incessant screechings and croakings, when hungry. They will toy with anything bright or glittering, and they make most amusing pets.



*The nest hole is plastered, and the imprisoned female clamours from the slit for food.*

The Bombay Natural History Society had kept a Great Indian Hornbill as a pet in its office in Bombay for over 26 years. It was a great favourite with the staff and the visitors, and among its many accomplishments was its capacity to catch a tennis ball thrown at it from several yards away.

U. C. Chopra



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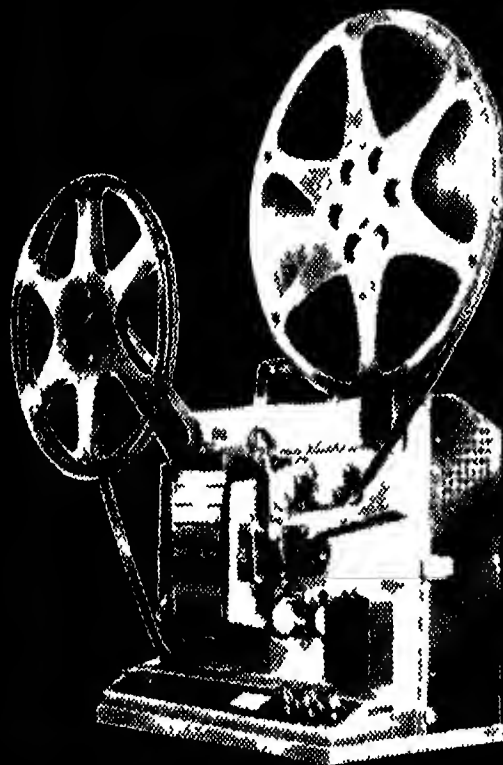
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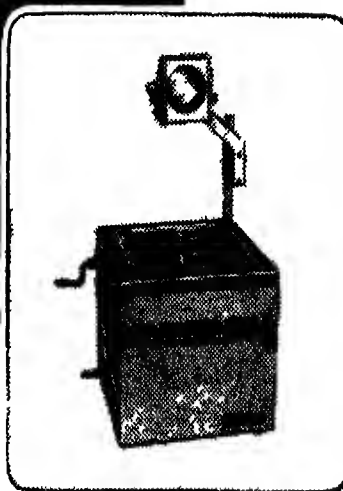
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ON the backdrop of the Andromeda galaxy, which was a carpet of stars in the otherwise jet black sky, a mammoth oval-shaped spaceship stood calmly, quietly. Its silvery nose and two triangular wings at the rear shone dully in the dim light of a distant star. The circular antennas at various points along its huge egg-like body were all still. All the portholes of the space ship, though visible in the dim light, were dark and looked empty. There was the silence of tomb about the spaceship, as though it had been abandoned. There was no visible sign of damage either. It appeared to be in perfect working condition.

Through the cockpit of his small disc-shaped spacecraft, Krontz, the Andromedian being, was noting all these details about the mammoth spaceship. He also saw with his two red eyes a curious sign "von Neumann Galactic Rider" on the hull of the metallic spaceship, which was of not much significance to him because he was an uneducated being. He, however, knew one thing: the spaceship, even if it had suffered some internal damage, would fetch him a large amount, for it would sell like hot cakes in the civilized worlds of the galaxy. He had his own workshop on one of the planets of the Zombi star system, which was on the spiral

arm of the galaxy, where he used to bring old, disused spaceships and remove their vital components and metals to sell them in the civilized worlds.

When Krontz had begun this business, he used to purchase old spaceships from all over the galaxy and then scrap them for metal and components. In due course, during his frequent business trips to the various corners of the galaxy, he came across, off and on, spaceships which had been damaged and, therefore, abandoned. When he found that scrapping metal and components from these freely available abandoned spaceships fetched him huge profits, he switched over to salvaging them from the depths of space. In a short period of time, he amassed wealth and built his own small empire on the planet of the Zombi star system. On this planet, he built huge palaces and had at his command a large number of robot-servants and a fleet of robot spacecraft. But one's greed for wealth and power only increases when one has more and more of it.

There was another reason why Krontz wanted to grab more wealth and power. As an uneducated junk dealer, nobody in the civilized worlds respected him. He had, therefore, lived aloof and had established his empire around an isolated star. He had a great desire to show the civilized worlds what he was capable of and what he could achieve all by himself. He, therefore, continued his search for abandoned spaceships in remote and less frequented corners of the galaxy. There was always a risk involved in such ventures, but he was always ready to take it, come what may.

Using his paws, Krontz pressed two handles on the panel on his left. Immediately, two shots were heard and

robot spacecraft detached themselves from the underside of his disc-shaped spacecraft. They went zooming towards the spaceship and then began to hover about it, searching for any harmful nuclear radiations, deadly germs, or any suspicious activity inside the spaceship. In due course, the spacecraft returned and reported that the huge spaceship was completely harmless and intact. Krontz was especially anxious about the spaceship because, for the first time, he had ventured that far from the civilized worlds and his own home-base. He was then almost at the boundary of the galaxy, where there were no stars in the neighbourhood. In fact, except for a few adventure-seekers like him, few of his brethren had ever travelled to the boundary of the galaxy. An uneasy feeling kept nagging him and kept the two horns atop his skinny head vibrating. The spaceship was strange in appearance, unlike any he had seen during all his business trips.

"There are thousands of civilized worlds," Krontz reasoned, pawing his long, bushy whiskers, as greed overtook genuine feeling, "some as yet unknown even. Any adventure seeker from these unknown worlds could have built this strange looking spaceship. Moreover, the spaceship seems to be in perfect working condition. I can sell it for a very large sum rightaway."

He pushed another set of four handles and four powerful robot spacecraft built specially for hauling heavy loads approached the spaceship. The robot spacecraft looked like fleas before the mammoth spaceship, but they had enough power to haul it across the galaxy. Each spacecraft released a harpoon-like dart, which attached itself to the silvery nose of the spaceship.

Securing the spaceship thus, the robot spacecraft pulled together. The spaceship stirred once and appeared as if it was too heavy to move. But when the robot spacecraft tried again, it moved ahead with a jerk and followed them. After making sure that the spaceship was well secured, Krontz followed the group in his own spacecraft at a short distance. Setting the course of the robot spacecraft for his home-base in the Zombi star system, he began to relax.

By and by, stars grew in number as the spaceship was brought into the centre of the galaxy. One of the isolated stars, known as Zombi, began to grow in size. The home base of Krontz was on the innermost planet of this star, and it was towards this planet that the 'space procession' headed. One by one the outer planets of the Zombi star system came into view and then receded. When a giant planet, which contained a large amount of methane in its atmosphere, came into view, something happened to startle Krontz. To his extreme bewilderment, he saw a huge door opening in the rear of the spaceship and a spacecraft came out of it and flew towards the planet!

But before he could order his robot spacecraft to pursue and destroy it, there was a bolt of fire and the next moment his own spacecraft was tumbling in space. Another bolt of fire hit his spacecraft very near the cockpit. He was thrown off his seat and his horns hit the ceiling of the cockpit. He did not know what happened next; he was unconscious.

Twenty days passed before he came to, when he felt that something was irritating his throat. He opened his eyes and found himself in the damaged cockpit. As the past events flashed

through his mind, he immediately got up and leapt towards the cracked window of the cockpit.

The space outside was as usual jet black and studded with stars here and there. But right ahead was the giant planet of his Zombi star system, shining orange and red, and alongside stood the mammoth spaceship. Somehow he felt that there was not one, but two spaceships looking very similar. He rubbed his eyes and again looked carefully. There were indeed two exactly similar spaceships near the planet! 'How is this possible?' he wondered in his dazed state. 'Has a second one joined it?' But when he saw what was happening aboard the two spaceships, he got his answer, too. Their sides had been drawn out and now formed huge platforms. The platforms were humming with activity. Robots of all sizes and shapes were assembling a new spaceship equally mammoth in size, on one half of the platform of each spaceship. Many cranes were in action; molten metal poured out of huge cauldrons; welding was going on, sending sparks all over the platforms. On the other half of the platforms, robot spacecraft were landing and taking off every other minute. Some were bringing methane—the energy fuel—from the giant planet nearby and the others mineral ores from one of the moons of the planet. There were also robot spacecraft hovering above the spaceships to guard against any surprise attack.

There was no doubt left in Krontz's mind as to the meaning of all that activity. Using the fuel and mineral resources of the nearby giant planet, the spaceship he was towing had built similar mammoth spaceships while he remained unconscious. At that moment, both the spaceships were busy build-



ing two more similar spaceships which, in turn, would build still others, and so on. This process of building exactly similar spaceships—as powerful as the original—would continue like a nuclear chain reaction, Krontz realised, as long as the fuel and resources of the planet lasted. 'One spaceship had built another to become two spaceships; the two spaceships are building two more to become four spaceships; four spaceships would become sixteen. . . sixteen would. . .' thought Krontz. The number of such mammoth spaceships would rise exponentially with the passage of time! Krontz's dazed head began to whirl as he thought this over.

The next moment something came to his mind like a flash and left him stunned and gaping at the mammoth spaceships. It dawned upon him that the spaceship was a hostile, alien visitor to his galaxy and that was why it had appeared strange to him at first. He, therefore, decided to inform the nearest gala-

ctic patrol about the mighty alien presence in the galaxy. But to his dismay he found that everything had gone out of order in his spacecraft, and it had been reduced to a piece of junk and he had got trapped in it! The irritation in his throat suddenly increased. He clutched at it without any relief. He realised that there was no more breathable air in the cockpit window, he could see the next batch of spaceships getting ready for the launching and assembling of another two. Tears came to his eyes as he realised the folly he had committed in his greed, not only for himself but for the entire galaxy. . .

At the time Krontz was dying in his drifting junk of spacecraft the following brief, yet telling telegraphic message reached the Mission Control on the icy planet Pluto of the solar system in the Milky Way galaxy, some billions of light years away:

FROM VON NEUMANN GALACTIC RIDER TO THE CONTROL:

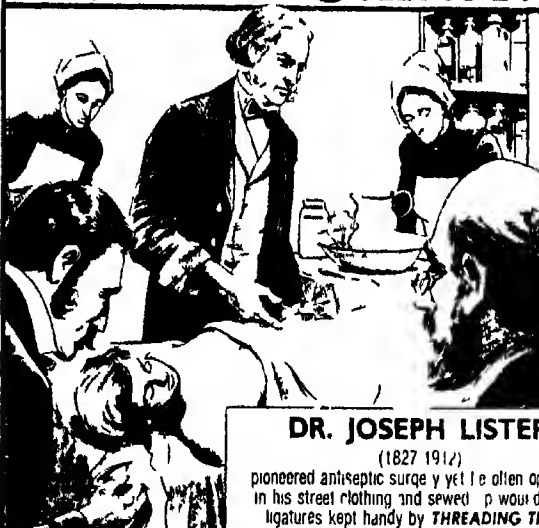


SORRY FOR THE DELAY IN RESPONDING. WAS STRANDED NEAR THE EDGE OF THE ANDROMEDA GALAXY — REPEAT ANDROMEDA GALAXY—FOR WANT OF FUEL—THE FAULT HAS SINCE BEEN RECTIFIED AT PRESENT, NEAR THE CENTRE OF THE GALAXY PREPARATIONS FOR A MAJOR AT-

TACK ON FUEL AND MINERALS ARE APLENTY IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD TO BUILD AND LAUNCH A THOUSAND SHIPS FOR THE FIRST ATTACK WILL CONFIRM VICTORY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TILL THEN, FAREWELL!

Dilip M. Salwi


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# Waste not make Garden!



“WASTE not, want not” is a well-known saying. If you were to visit the Rock Garden of Chandigarh, you might like to say, “waste not, make garden!” The Rock Garden is a marvellous example of art from waste materials, like broken bangles, chinaware, wash-basins, broken cycle frames, and fused fluorescent tubes. Stones of different sizes and shapes have been made to resemble birds, animals, gods and goddesses, and people. The visitor is filled with wonder and joy when he sees such unique creations from mostly urban waste. That wastage can be utilized in such a beautiful manner is beyond one’s belief.

It will be difficult to guess that a fairyland lies behind the ordinary looking outer wall made of coaltar drums. The exterior is so very deceptive! That’s why the garden remained undiscovered till 10 years ago. It has low arc-like gates. One has to bow low to enter the place. It is divided into different

sections. At the end of each section, one bows again to pass through the gate to see the wonders of the next section. Absorbed in the fantasies presented in the garden, one keeps crossing different gates, and before one is aware of it, he is out of the garden!

Whether it be coaltar drums, cycle frames, mud pots, porcelainware, waste electrical goods, fluorescent tubes, bangles, chinaware, pieces of wash-basins and flush pots, caps of sodawater bottles, boot polish tins, broken crockery, feathers— for that matter anything that anyone throws out— has been put to aesthetic use in the garden. Like, the saddle of a cycle becomes a doll, a bear is made out of a cycle frame, a bird is fashioned out of the broken silencer of a car, or a wall is made up of fluorescent tubes!

The Rock Garden is like a roofless museum. There are two cottages — one for poets, writers and artists, and the other used for quiet meditation. The first one is tastefully decorated with old musical instruments, like the tabla, sitar, and sarangi. Some hanging dried bottle gourds provide a fitting backdrop. Further on is the “Diwan-e-aam”, with a row of courtiers but without a king or a queen! A giraffe and a *trimurti* (three-faced figure) made up of sanitary waste act as sentinels at the entrance. The lifestyle of ancient monarchs is depicted in detail. There is a bathing tank, where the ‘queen’ can bathe in privacy. The wall is made up of white electric cut-outs, with trellis consisting of clay balls. There are displays of maidens (dolls) wearing colourful costumes made with broken bangles, women carrying water, musicians, peacocks, monkeys, buffaloes, camels, bears, and other birds and animals. Life-size statues of village folk, made with waste pieces of cloth, appear very realistic.

All this is the brainwave of Mr. Nek Chand. He was a Road Inspector with the Chandigarh administration. The humble artist in him began making his “empire”

(Turn to page 76)



*Left: The entrance to the Rock Garden, as seen from inside. Note the low arch-shaped gates and stone formation around*



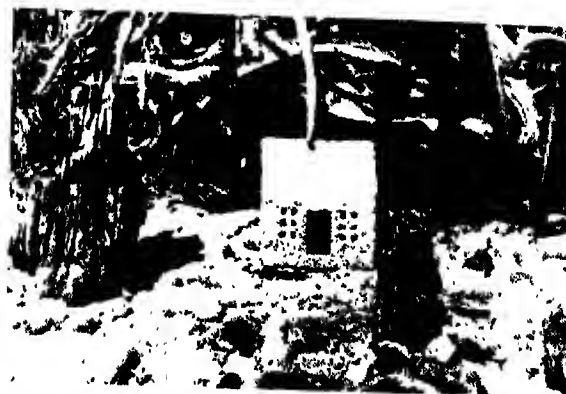
*Above They ask for alms*



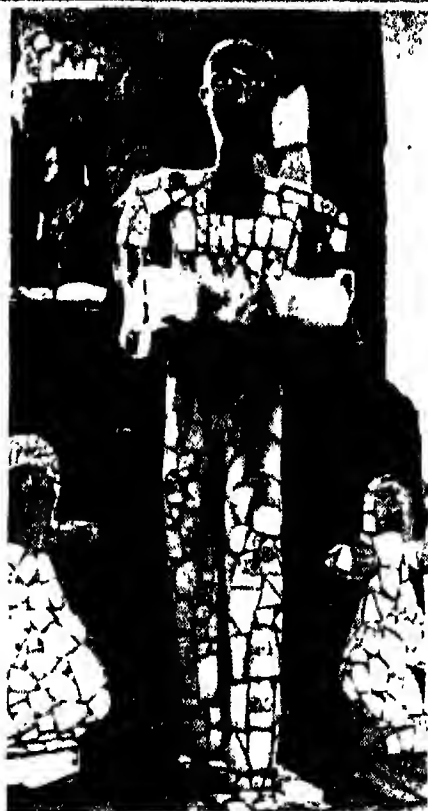
*Above: An invalid*



*Left. A giraffe, made of crockery and sanitaryware. The skeleton was a truck silencer!*



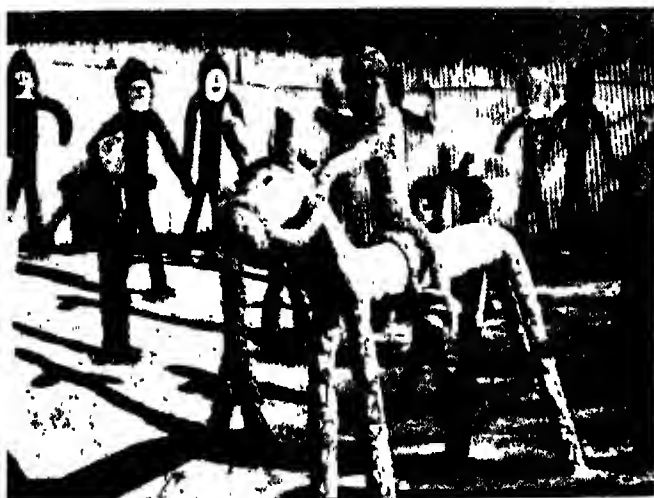
*Above: A tiny house in the garden.*



*Left: "Please, have a cup of tea."*



*Above: Captain Monkey of the Rock Garden*



*Left: Lord Yama (god of Death) and his servants*



*Above: A village belle in her traditional dress.*



*Left: A crowd of people*

# ROBERT RABBIT'S UNHAPPY DAY

**N**O' said Robert Rabbit to himself and stuck out his chin with a quivering determination, 'I shall not cry. What if everybody has forgotten my birthday? Pa is so busy at his Carrot Canning Factory that he even forgets to eat his lunch! And little Itzy-Bitzy cares only for her dolls.'

Robert Rabbit thought with a sigh: 'If only Ma had been here. She would have baked my favourite cherry cream pie and she would have invited everyone from Little Rabbit Rock for my birthday party.' But Ma was away looking after Aunty Rita's baby and would not be back before Saturday.

"So what?" cried Robert Rabbit, staring angrily at the lush green meadow in front of

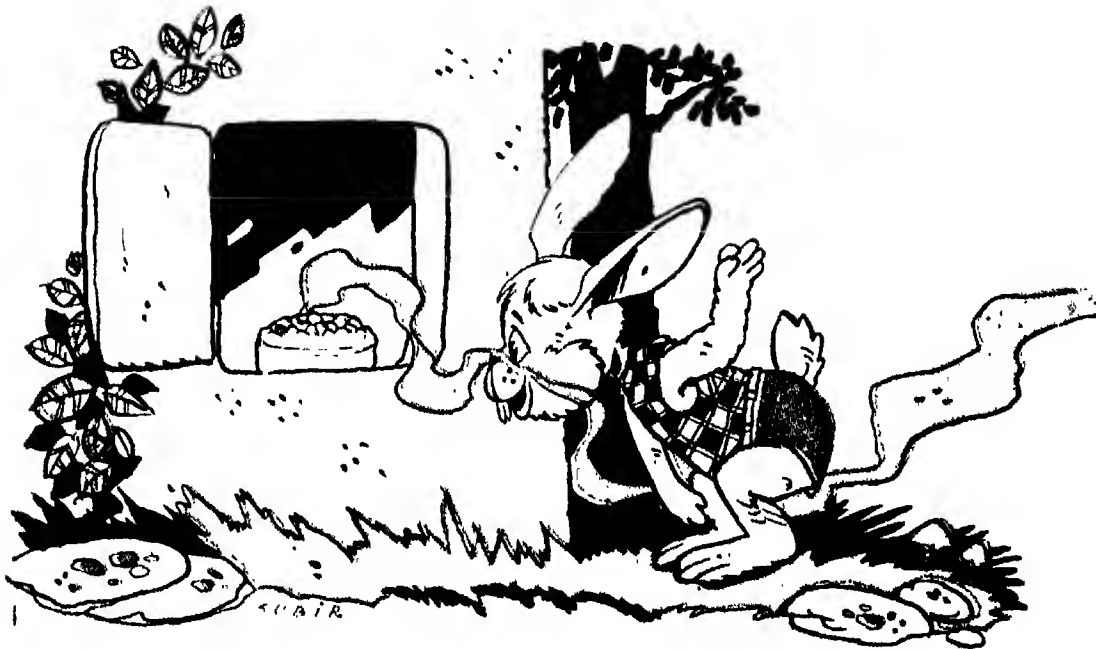
his home. "It doesn't really matter!"

But deep inside his heart he knew it did matter.

Suddenly he sat bolt upright and pricked up his long ears. He sniffed and sniffed again.

"Well, sniff sniff," he murmured. "that smells good, that - sniff - ah - smell of cherries and - hum - cream and - oh - pie. Hey, that smells of cherry cream pie. Hey, that smells of cherry cream pie. Yes, it does!"

He jumped to his feet and sniffed again. He sniffed east, he sniffed west, and then he sniff-sniffed in the direction of Grauny Mopsy's house. And there, on the kitchen window sill, golden brown and steaming hot,







were three big, cherry cream pies! Robert Rabbit whizzed over the meadow and reached Granny Mopsy's house in a flash. He sniffed short sniffs, hmm, hmm, hmm, ah, at each of the three pies. Then he craned his neck and peeped through the window.

Inside the cozy kitchen, he saw Granny Mopsy set the table with her good rose-bud china. There were sixteen plates, cups and saucers and a big chocolate cake.

"Hmmm," Robert felt his mouth water.

He watched Grauny Mopsy wipe her paws on the apron she wore over her dark blue Sunday dress with its white lace collar. "Ah," she cried out in delight, "everything is ready for the party. Let the guests come."

Then she waltzed around the kitchen and sang: "La la la la liiiiii, la la la la loooooooooo."

Robert Rabbit did not feel like singing. He sniffed, not at the pies. No, this time he sniffed to choke back the tears.

"No," he said in a determined little voice, his paw tightening into a fist. "I shall not cry. Even if everybody of Little Rabbit Rock in the Red Carrot Valley but me is invited to Granny Mopsy's coffee party, even if everybody but me eats her chocolate cake and cherry cream pies, I shall not cry. No, I will not."

Then he turned to leave. But before he did, he had to take in the smell of his favour-



ite pie once more. Raising himself on his toes, he moved one of the pies closer still, till the tip of his nose almost touched the crisp creamy pie. Ah, it smelt so good! If only he could have a piece of pie, just a small one, because he loved cherry cream pie and because today was his birthday. Hoopla, there! The pie slipped off the sill! It would have fallen, had Robert Rabbit not gripped it tightly. And before he actually knew how and why, he had turned on his heels and run. He leaped over thistles, jumped over daisies, and sprinted over shrubs holding the hot pie close to him.

Behind him he heard Granny Mopsy call out of the window. "Robert Rabbit, Robert Rabbit, I sure am surprised!"

Robert Rabbit gave a start. He tripped, and nearly dropped the pie.

"Robert Rabbit," ordered Granny Mopsy, "stop and return the pie, you thief!"

"Thief!" Robert Rabbit stumbled. "I'm not a thief, I just . . . I only tried . . . I, I I."

Then he tripped and fell headlong into the grass. The pie flew from his paw, hit the ground and broke into a hundred pieces.

Robert Rabbit lifted his head and stared at what had been a cherry cream pie, stared at the hundred crumbly pieces. Then he buried his head in the grass and did what he had wanted to do all morning. He cried.

Suddenly, he felt a warm paw tenderly stroke his back.

"Robert," a soft voice called, "are you hurt?"

Robert Rabbit shook his head.

"I'm glad," said Granny Mopsy, "but why are you crying? Robert, Robert, what's the matter?"

Robert Rabbit raised his head and looked into Granny Mopsy's dark brown eyes.

"It's because," he sobbed, "it's because everybody has forgotten my birthday."

"Has *forgotten* your birthday?" repeated Granny Mopsy astonished and then laughed softly. "Oh, you silly little Robert. Don't you know that these pies are for you and your birthday guests? We all know that today is your birthday. And since your mother is away, we thought we would celebrate it at my place. Your father and I wanted to surprise you, but, well, maybe we should have told you. I'm sorry, Robert. But cheer up now, dear, and come."

"But the pie, the pie. . . ."

"Oh, don't worry about the spoilt pie. There is still time to bake another one. That is, if *you* will help me."

"Yes, I will." Robert Rabbit sniffed, shuffling to his feet, wiping away the last tear. He dusted his blue trousers and murmured, "I'm sorry, Granny Mopsy, that was foolish of me. . . ."

"Oh, we all do foolish things once in a while, especially when we are sorry for ourselves."

"Now I feel quite silly," said Robert Rabbit and grinned.

"Well, I must admit you were."

"I feel so silly, Granny Mopsy, that I think I'll just sing."

"Well, do," said Granny Mopsy, "it's your birthday."

"Yes, it's my birthday," cried Robert Rabbit happily and hopped and skipped and jumped over the meadow. He threw up his paws and sang at the top of his voice:

*"La la la happy day—  
Today is my birthday.  
Happy birthday Robert Rabbit  
Happy birthday to meeeeeeee."*

Sigrun Srivastava



# RÖNTGEN'S X-RAYS



SURELY, all of you must have heard of X-rays. Some of your friends might have sustained a fracture. To have a clear picture of the fracture, the doctor had an X-ray taken. Let's see how it all came about.

X-rays were really a chance discovery. That is not to belittle their great discoverer, Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen (1845-1923), a professor of Physics in Wurzburg, Germany. Röntgen was working with the "Crooke's tube" — a special glass tube with gases at very low pressure. A wire was sealed in the glass and high voltage electrical discharges could be passed through the gas in the tube. Röntgen was studying the rays emitted by the tube. On November 8, 1895, much to his surprise, he noticed that a barium salt coated paper near the tube fluoresced!

The next few weeks, he worked very hard. When he was sure of his discovery, he presented his finding to the Physical Medical Society of Wurzburg. His work was titled "On a New Kind of Ray". As he did not know about their nature, he called them X-rays. Later, it was decided to call them 'Röntgen's rays'.

Now, what was it that held Röntgen's attention? The wonder rays passed easily through paper and wood, but not through metals. He exposed a photographic plate and took pictures of objects. The rays easily passed through books and clothes! Röntgen even took a picture of his wife's hand! And, as he expected, her ring cast a dark shadow!

He thus realised how important it could be to medicine! Surgeons were thrilled. Now they were sure where the bone was broken. The stones in the kidney became visible. Röntgen became so famous that the Emperor of Germany himself had a picture taken of his crippled left arm! For his great discovery, Röntgen won the Nobel Prize in 1901.

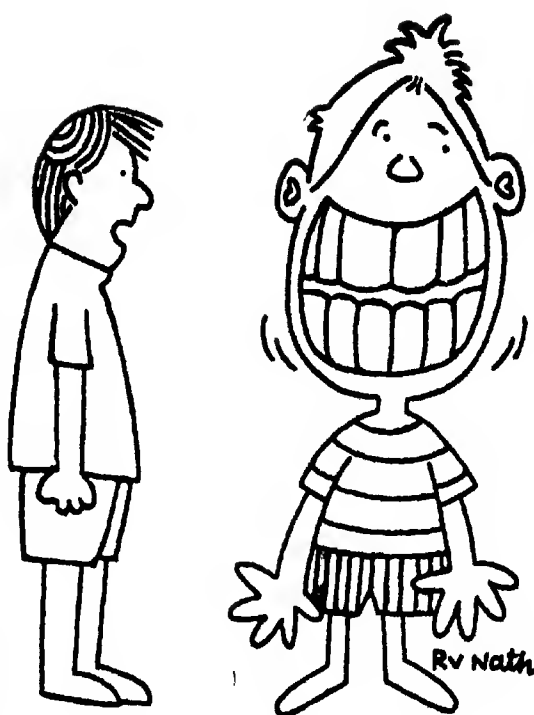
The first X-ray photograph for clinical purposes was made by Swenton in January 1896. Now people began to wonder: It is easy enough to take a picture of the hard, dense bones; but how about pictures of soft organs like stomach and intestines? This problem was solved by Walter Cannon. In 1897, he did an interesting experiment. He fed animals with bismuth salt and took the X-ray. Ah! the X-ray showed the stomach and intestines. But Bismuth is poisonous and no patient would

dare try it! Thus scientists discovered Barium Sulphate, which is harmless and also visible on the X-ray. Later people devised methods to study the lungs and kidneys.

But it came as a big blow to scientists when it was found that X-rays were harmful. Thus, precautions were enforced. Today, in the X-ray departments, people use lead overalls, as lead absorbs the X-rays. They wear a 'dosimeter'—a simple device that tells how much their bodies have absorbed.

Thus, Rontgen's discovery has led to a new field called 'Radiology'. These doctors called "radiologists" diagnose disease by looking at the X-rays! Today, many diseases are even cured by X-ray therapy.

V. Jagadha



*"I fixed my dad's false teeth  
and now I can't take them off!"*

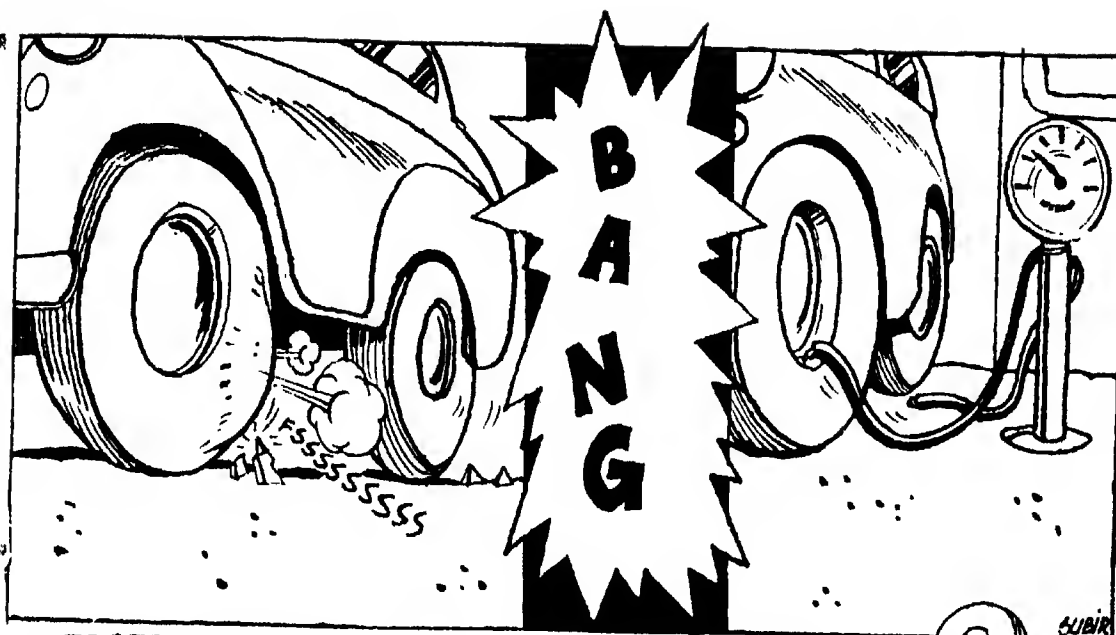
*(Continued from page 69)*

secretly at the PWD Stores located in the foothills of the mighty Shivalik range. During the day, he performed his official duties; and at night, he would work on his statues and figures. Waste tyres, when burnt, provided the light he needed and his skilled hands created an "empire" full of wonders. He also planted trees to suit the layout of the garden. Nek Chand sweated for ten long years. He did not take any help from the Government or any institution. Had he not used his imagination and skill for the sake of art and beauty, all the waste materials used in the garden would have remained just a heap of rubbish.

The Rock Garden was formally opened to public on January 24, 1976. A large number of visitors — both from India and abroad — have since enjoyed the beautiful sights. Nek Chand's art has been appreciated by everybody. He was invited to New Delhi to create a mini rock garden at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. In France, he held an exhibition titled "Bhul Bhulaiyya". It depicted a scene from a typical Indian village.

The story of the Rock Garden of Chandigarh is the story of a single man's courage, hard work, and dedication.

Thakur Paramjit



## THE WORLD OF TIRES

**Y**OU have already read how air pressure works in a pressure cooker. (Children's World, February 1983). Tires (also tyres), too, work on the principle of air pressure. You often hear a tyre burst (really, what a thing to happen!) and there follows a series of activities to get the tyre repaired.

A tire mechanic locates the puncture, releases the left over air from the tire, repairs it, and inflates the tire again using a pump and a meter or gauge. All this is quite common (even when your father goes to the petrol bunk for filling air or petrol), but you keep wondering, why that sound while the tire burst? Why the puncture? Why should it be inflated at all? How exactly is it inflated? What does that meter do?

Shall we start with the tire burst? How is the sound produced? Any tire that is inflated has a lot of air (under pressure) enclosed in it. When there is

a puncture, all this air being under pressure tries to come out of this small opening. While doing so, it produces vibrations of the tire. Also the molecules of the air, while going out, push and strike each other, causing movements and vibrations amongst themselves. It is these and other vibrations that cause the sound (sound is produced by vibration of matter or vibration set up in matter).

### Why the puncture?

Puncture occurs when a tire goes over a sharp object like a nail. At places on the tire that are worn out and weak, this puncture becomes easier (excess pressure of the air inside a tire also causes it to burst, because the excess air tries to come out of the tire, thereby bursting it).

The tire burst can also be due to an increase in the air pressure as a result of the increase in temperature, after

being driven on a hot metalled road.

### **Why is the tire inflated at all?**

An uninflated tire ('flat tire') will not roll smoothly (if at all it does) on a road or ground. You can test this by rolling such a tire and an inflated one side by side, and you will notice the difference.

When air under pressure is filled in it (inflated), it is called a pneumatic tire. It is this air that makes it roll smoothly and makes your journey on a scooter or in a car or bus comfortable by its cushioning effect.

Do you know how the idea of inflating tires started at all? John Boyd Dunlop of Belfast, Ireland, invented a double tube bicycle tire. While Dunlop had always been interested in the problem of reducing vibrations of vehicles, the idea of a pneumatic tire came to him in an effort to equip his son's tricycle in such a way that he might win a race against the neighbourhood boys.

When a tire strikes an obstacle protruding above the road surface, the road and the tire both experience shocks, a shock impact to the road and a shock reaction to the vehicle. The latter is quite severe even at any ordinary speed and on a seemingly ordinary road because the vehicle tends to ride up over the rough spots in a road and so we experience frequent jerks (movements) to our vehicle and to our body. That is why your body aches due to the jerks while sitting in a bullock cart or horse carriage (both of which have solid wheels), when you travel to your grandparents' village in a remote corner of India, where they alone are the modes of conveyance.

But the violent motion of the rear part of a truck or van is due to the 'loose' part of the vehicle, which being relatively unsupported vibrates/moves more than the front and middle parts of the vehicle, which are supported by the four wheels.

To get a cushioning effect (i.e., not to be affected by the bumps of the road and hence of the vehicle), the shock reaction that the vehicle experiences should not be transferred to our body. If the tire is elastic, then though it gets distorted, it will come back to its original shape (flexible) quickly without having enough time to pass on the shock to us.

Solid rubber tires and tires filled with spongy rubber are flexible/elastic—but not flexible enough to take up the distortions/shocks. They will not pass over obstacles easily. Air, like all other fluids, is very elastic, i.e., it will return to its original shape when the force which distorted it is removed. So, when the tire is filled with air, the tire as well as the air in it gets distorted (both being elastic), but air being very elastic quickly comes back to its original shape (of the tire), and the tire goes back to its original shape as soon as it has passed over the stone or obstacle, and you don't feel or know that the tire has passed over an obstacle. You do get jolts if the distortion/obstacle is too much for the tire and air to cope with.

Solid tires are used in tricycles, airplanes, while pneumatic tires are used in scooters, cars, and buses.

### **How exactly is a tire inflated?**

When we blow air from our mouth, a balloon 'inflates' or expands out. To inflate or expand a tire, e.g., a cycle

tire, you will have to use a lot more air than what you can blow from your mouth. So, a cycle pump is used. This pump draws air from its surrounding atmosphere and reduces its volume. Since the volume of the air is reduced, its pressure is increased. This volume of air under pressure is now led into the tire through a small hole. The process is again repeated till the whole tire is filled with air under pressure. In the case of scooter and car tires, this process is carried out with the help of a pump called the compressor pump, since a relatively large amount of compressed (pressurised) air is necessary to inflate these tires.

### What does the metre do?

On the metre is a dial with a pointer pointing to numbers 1,2,3, etc....lb/ This needle keeps moving when the air is being pumped inside and when it comes to a particular value, the connection is put off. It means that an amount of air which can exert a pressure of ... lb/inch has gone into the tire, so the tire with this amount of air is ... lb/inch. It is important to know this value because just the right amount of air is needed for the smooth running of the tire/vehicle, to prevent the tire from bursting, to avoid 'jumps' of the vehicle. You will notice that the same amount of air is not filled in all the tires of a vehicle. The front tire pressure differs from that of the back tire, because, otherwise the front tire will jump more and the vehicle will topple.

The air pressure also varies with the type of tire—scooter, car, bus, etc, because the tires have different weights to support in each case.

P. Rani Rao

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6. Entries rejected once should not be submitted again.
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**CHILDREN'S WORLD (Photo Competition)**

**NEHRU HOUSE ● NEW DELHI 110002**

## **Straight from a Game Sanctuary**

### **ADVENTURES OF A WILDLIFE WARDEN**

**By E. R. C. Davidar**

**National Book Trust, New Delhi**

**Rs 2.50**

**W**ILD life and jungle stories have been a perennial staple of all children's literature. From Kipling's *Jungle Book* to *Winnie the Pooh*, animals—tame and wild—have delighted generations of children. In the book under review, we have a modest addition to the existing stock.

We are not introduced to the author (a desirable feature for all such books), but it is evident that he has been a forest official, because the central figures of the three stories in the book involves a Wild Life Warden in an imaginary game sanctuary.

Thus the narration has a great deal of authenticity about it, and there are fine observations scattered here and there which could only come from having "lived" those moments.

The first tale, for example, is an encounter with poachers, those unlicensed hunters who are the bane of all forest officials. In "Adventure with Poachers", one expected to have some rather exciting stuff. After all, a writer can enlarge upon reality and pack all the action in. But what we are treated to is a straight-forward situation and some rather heavy-handed tactics to overpower the bad guys.

The second story is the most convincing of the three, perhaps because it moves the reader the most. "Hunting the Cross Tusker" tells of a kind-hearted warden (why

does the book keep repeating "Wild Life Warden" on every page?) who spares the life of a marauding pachyderm by correctly inferring that its crossed tusks make normal feeding difficult and that a suppurating swelling on its neck naturally makes it quite foul-tempered.

This story also makes up for the rather tame third story, "Nightwatch", which is not a story at all but merely a descriptive piece to illustrate jungle lore.

The illustrator is descriptive without being illuminative, a trait he shares with the author; for, a children's story must excite the wonder and natural curiosity of the very young. It should grip their attention from the very first sentence and envelop them in a spell that is only broken by the final full stop. Any story that does anything less than this either needs a diligent rewriting by the author or the decisive intervention of the editor—whose presence is sadly missed in this book. However, the book is entitled to a place in any children's library.

**Balachandran**

### **A TALE OF TROUBLE**

**By M. C. Gabriel**

**National Book Trust, New Delhi**

**Rs 2.50**

**M**OST folk tales, especially those with animal characters, carry an instant appeal for children of the 5-8 age group. "A Tale of Trouble", which is the story of a mouse with a too-long-tail, belongs to this class.

Sidey—the heroine of the tale—gets her

name because she is perpetually looking sideways in order to admire her long tail. She is extremely proud of her asset and uses it in various ways, to the envy of all other mice. Then, one day, she knocks against sleeping Pussy, who manages to grab her tail and hold it fast. When Sidey tries to free herself, the tail breaks and remains in Pussy's grasp. Naughty Pussy is not interested in eating the tail, but she demands a price for returning it to Sidey. Sidey would get back her tail if she brings some milk for Pussy and not otherwise. Sidey's quest for milk starts off a series of adventures.

The milkman is unable to provide milk unless Sidey fetches some grass for his cow. The woman who sells grass demands a cup of oil in return. The oil merchant asks for a green mango and the fruit-seller's wife asks for a cup of flour before parting with the mango. At last Sidey goes to the flour mill. The miller agrees to give her a cup of flour but demands a written assurance that she would never enter the place again. And now Sidey has to confess that she is unable to do it! The miller is horrified at her ignorance despite having attended school. Sidey tells him it is because she spent all her time — even in school — looking at her tail!

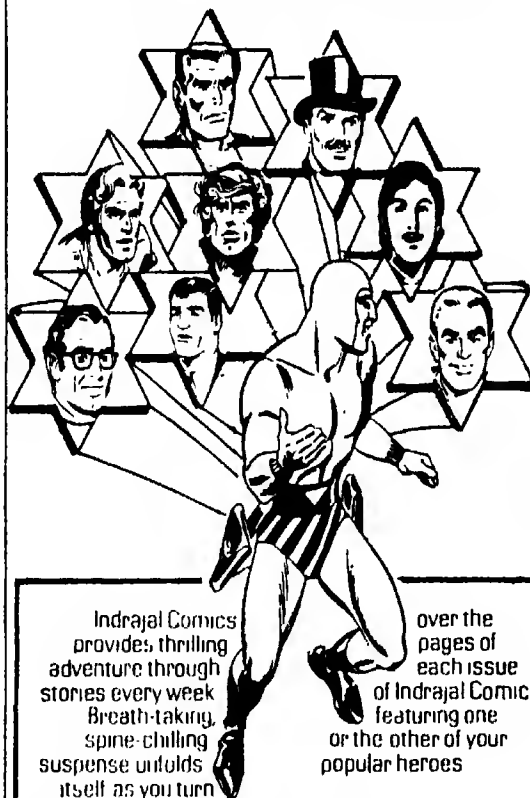
Finally Sidey gets a green mango for the flour, a cup of oil for the green mango, grass for the oil, and milk for the grass. Sidey gets back her tail. It is fixed up by Dr. Spider. The very next moment Sidey starts looking at it sideways all over again!

The story is amusing, and the author has narrated it simply and humorously. In spite of her vanity and foolishness, Sidey is quite adorable. Pussy — perhaps because of her age and inability — is less malicious than one would expect a cat to be. Doctor Spider is also unusually helpful. The illustrations are charming, and make the story come alive so colourfully.

Bublee

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# Their Favourite Children's Books



**J**AWAHARLAL NEHRU'S "Letters from a Father to His Daughter", the deluxe gift volume of "Panchatantra Tales", and "You and the Computer", all published by the Children's Book Trust, were the best-sellers among children's books at the recent Book Fairs at Calcutta and Chandigarh.

The fortnight-long Calcutta Book Fair from February 4 attracted more than a million visitors. And CBT's stall had milling crowds on all the days, sometimes the crowd forming a queue so that everyone got a chance to enter the stall and take a look at the books attractively displayed there.

Among the visitors were the Vice-President of India, Mr. M. Hidayatullah (see photo at left, top) who, incidentally, had inaugurated the International Children's Book Fair organized by the CBT in New Delhi in November 1979. Another important visitor was the West Bengal Governor, Mr. B.D. Pande. All of CBT's Bengali titles were a sell-out at Calcutta.

A similar experience awaited the biography of Guru Nanak in Gurumukhi, Hindi, as well as English, at the Chandigarh Book Fair (February 25 to March 7). All the three versions were popular with the modest crowd at Chandigarh (see photo at left, bottom). The Governor of Haryana, Mr G.D. Tapase, was one of the prominent visitors to the CBT stall.

## AT LONDON

At the Exhibition of Indian books in London from October 25 to November

## CHILDREN'S BOOK TRUST NEW DELHI



13, as part of last year's prestigious Festival of India in England, about 120 children's books in English were on show, and CBT's tally there was 35. Some books in Hindi and other languages were also on display in the section for regional languages.

### BOOK CLUB

The Children's Book Trust had something novel to introduce at the two Fairs: the **CBT Book Club**. Those who take a membership for 1983 (the fee is only Rs 100) have the advantage of

receiving nearly a dozen publications scheduled for 1983 — expected to be priced about Rs. 120 — and 12 issues of "Children's World", besides getting 33-1/3 per cent discount on CBT's pre-1983 publications. It all works out to a nett saving of Rs 50. On enrolment, members will receive a cute little membership card. By quoting the membership number, one can also ask for answers to any general knowledge question! Sure, all this must be pretty attractive, what do you say? Hurry up to join the **CBT Book Club**. You may ask for more details.

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## Youngest International Master

**C**HESS originated in India many centuries ago. Yet, India has not performed well at the international level ever since this game assumed competitive standard. In fact, we can boast of only six International Masters at present, with the latest additions emerging from the recent Bhilwara International Grandmasters Tournament.

The two latest International Masters are Dibyendu Barua and Pravin Mahadeo Thipsay. The one to make news however was the teenaged chess prodigy from West Bengal, Dibyendu, who became the youngest International Master from India at the age of 16. India's first International Master was Manuel Aaron in 1961; he was followed by Ravi Kumar, Ravi Shekhar, and T. N. Parameswaran.

Dibyendu Barua performed exceedingly well to finish a joint third with Pravin Thipsay in the Bhilwara Tournament held in Delhi. He sent waves of joy among the chess followers by drawing his games with two International Grandmasters from the USSR, Joseph Davidovich Dorfman and Mark Evgenovich Taimanov. This was not the first time Barua had performed creditably against such stiff opponents. He had shocked world number 2, Viktor Korchnoi, in the Lloyd Banks Master Chess Tournament at London last September.

Born on 6th October 1966, Barua fell in love with chess at the age of five and within six months was participating in tournaments. At the age of 12, he became the youngest ever to play in the 1978 Nationals 'A'. The same year he

had bagged his first title when he won the West Bengal State Sub-Junior title along with the Junior title also.

He stunned the chess world in 1979 by drawing with Soviet Grandmaster Aivar Gipsils in the International Alekhine Memorial Tournament at Calcutta. The Soviet star had then predicted that Barua had the potential of becoming the first Grandmaster from India.

Barua had easy pickings in 1980 when he won the Sub-Junior Nationals and also retained the title in the fifth and sixth nationals held at Udaipur and Pondicherry respectively. The year brought more laurels for Barua as he finished third in the World Sub-Junior Championship held at Argentina in July. The same year, he also became the youngest player ever to be seeded in the Nationals 'A'.

Barua maintained a steady progress in 1982 to win the National 'B' at Agartala and All India Kidsons Open Tournament at Calcutta.

His success in chess has not interfered with his academic career. He is an 11th class student of Hare School, Calcutta, and once inside the classroom, Barua does not discuss chess with his classmates. Apart from chess, he plays



football, cricket, and table tennis. Barua owes his success to his father, Binoy Bhusan Barua, a chess player himself. The day cannot be far off when Dibyendu becomes India's first International Grandmaster, as predicted by even some of his opponents.

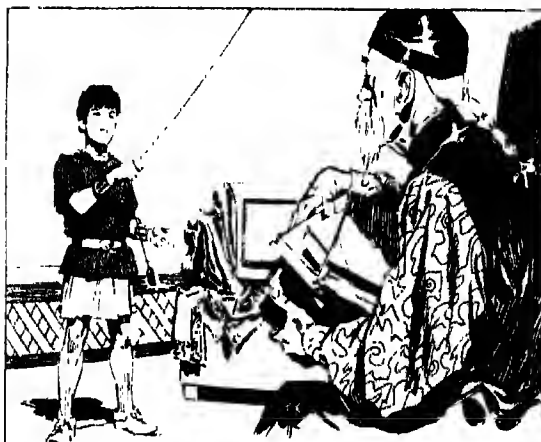
Lakshmi Rao



Our Story: GALAN HAS RETURNED WITH THE SACRED RING AND YUAN CHEN'S NECK IS SPARED. DEPRIVED OF THE SPECTACLE, THE CROWD TURNS UGLY, BUT EMPEROR HARSHA ORDERS A FEAST BROUGHT OUT. WHEN JAGAT AND HIS PLAYERS ARRIVE, THE SCAFFOLD BECOMES A STAGE. AMID THE NOISE AND CHAOS, ONLY MAYANA FINDS TIME FOR GRATITUDE.



AT HER TOUCH GALAN'S BACK ARCHES IN RECOGNITION! IT WAS THE PRINCESS WHO HAD HEALED HIS BLEEDING FLESH. HE BLUSHES WARMLY.



"WOMEN," HE SIGHS TO HIMSELF, NOT KNOWING WHAT HE MEANS. THE REUNION WITH YUAN CHEN IS SWEET, AS TEACHER AND STUDENT REDISCOVER EACH OTHER'S COMPANY. "YOU HAVE MISSED MANY LESSONS," THE SCHOLAR REBUKES HIM MERRILY. "NOW WE MUST CATCH UP."



NOT LONG AFTER, THE AGING HARSHA GIVES UP HIS THRONE. AMID GREAT POMP MAYANA ACCEPTS THE SACRED RING FROM HER FATHER AND IS CROWNED EMPRESS. THE EVIL TIMUR DOES NOT ATTEND. IT SEEMS HE HAD PROPOSED TO TEACH A CERTAIN DOG A LESSON...



... WHILE THE MASTIFF WAS OF A DIFFERENT OPINION. TO THE RELIEF OF HIS SUBJECTS, HIS KINGDOM PASSES TO MAYANA.



GALAN IS HAPPY IN UJJAIN, WHERE HE IS NO ONE'S YOUNGER BROTHER. WITH THE SPICE CARAVANS HE SENDS NEWS TO HIS FAMILY, BUT OF THEM HE HEARS ONLY SCRAPS, AND OF ARN'S LETTER NOUGHT. "FATHER," ARN BEGAN. "THIS REACHES YOU THANKS TO A CAPPADOCIAN MONK, A PERSIAN SILK MERCHANT, A DAMASCAN SLAYER, AND THE GOLD THAT CROSSED THEIR PALMS."



PRINCE ARN WRITES FROM INSIDE THE EASTERN EMPIRE, WHERE HE SEEKS THE INFANT BROTHER KIDNAPPED BY JUSTINIAN. "OUR FAMILY'S SAD TALE FOUND LITTLE SYMPATHY AMONG COMMON FOLK. THE EMPEROR HAS KEPT BULGARS AND AVARS AND PERSIANS AT BAY. THE COUNTRY PROSPERS, THE LAWS ARE FAIR, AND JUSTINIAN IS BELOVED.



"CERTAIN REMARKS OF MINE CONCERNING THE EMPEROR CAUSED OFFENSE, AND I AM AFRAID THAT APOLOGIES DID NOT ALWAYS RESTORE THE PEACE.



"FATHER, YOU HAD SAID BELISARIUS WAS A FRIEND. I PICKED MY WAY TO CONSTANTINOPLE. RIOTING HAD FLARED BETWEEN THE RIVAL BLUES AND GREENS, AND BELISARIUS BROUGHT IN TROOPS TO QUELL THE MOB. HE RECOGNIZED ME AS SOON AS I APPROACHED.



"THE GENERAL DISMOUNTED AT ONCE. THE NEXT I KNEW I WAS EATING DIRT. 'TAKE HIM TO THE CAMP, SOFTEN HIM UP, AND HAVE HIM WAITING IN MY TENT,' HE ORDERED. WHEN MY SENSES RETURNED, BELISARIUS WAS STANDING OVER ME. 'MY APOLOGIES,' HE SAID.



"I MUST BE CAREFUL. IN CONSTANTINOPLE, SUSPICION IS A DISEASE FOR WHICH THERE IS NO CURE.' HE OFFERED FOOD AND DRINK...



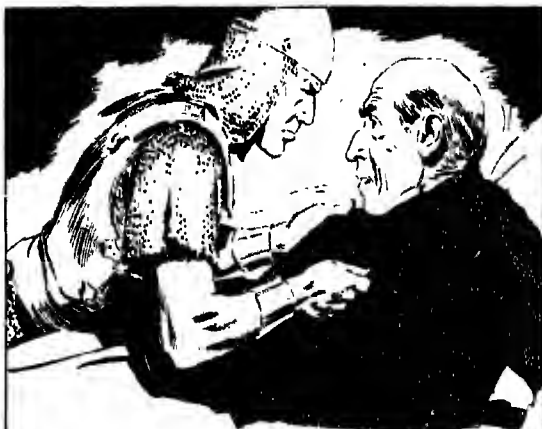
"... AND GAVE ME THE UNIFORM OF A 'CLIBANARIUS', OR KNIGHT. 'WHEN MY ARMY FACES IMPOSSIBLE ODDS,' HE SAID, 'I FEED IT EASY SKIRMISHES TO FORTIFY MORALE. THE ODDS AGAINST YOU ARE IMPOSSIBLE, BUT TONIGHT YOU WILL HAVE AN EASY VICTORY.' UNDER A FULL MOON, WE RODE OUT OF THE ANCIENT ROMAN CASTRUM TOWARD THE CAPITAL."



AS ARN'S LETTER IS READ PRINCE VALIANT BROODS. HOW FAR-FLUNG HIS FAMILY HAS BECOME! GALAN OFF WITH YUAN CHEN IN INDIA. AND FROM THERE? CATHAY? ARN SOMEWHERE IN ANATOLIA, LOOKING FOR A SON AND BROTHER NO ONE HAS EVER SEEN. WHO KNOWS WHERE THE INFANT MIGHT BE? VAL IS UNEASY AS HE LISTENS.



"BELISARIUS LED ME INTO A WEALTHY DISTRICT IN CONSTANTINOPLE," ARN CONTINUES. "WE STOPPED BEFORE A GREAT VILLA."



"PRIAM THE PHYSICIAN LIVES THERE," THE GENERAL TOLD ME. "ONLY HE KNOWS WHAT HAPPENED TO THE CHILD. PRIAM MUST NOT SEE ME. GOD SPEED." I WILL NOT BORE YOU WITH DETAILS. WHEN BELISARIUS LEFT I ENTERED THE VILLA AND AWAKENED THE PHYSICIAN.



"HE REMEMBERED ME FROM THE MISTY ISLES AND PROMPTLY FAINTED. PAIN, PROPERLY INFLICTED, BROUGHT HIM AROUND. 'THE CHILD,' I SAID. 'WHERE?' HIS TONGUE WAS LOOSE. HE HAD GIVEN THE BOY AWAY AT THE BAZAAR TO A PEASANT FROM THE FRONTIER.



"IT WAS THAT OR KILL HIM," PRIAM GASPED. "JUSTINIAN DID NOT CARE." FOR SPARING MY BROTHER'S LIFE I SPARED HIS. THAT WAS A MISTAKE. NO SOONER WAS I GONE THAN HE RAN FOR JUSTINIAN. THE WORD WENT OUT. BEYOND THE GATE OF CHARISIUS TWO SOLDIERS JUMPED ME BUT THEIR BLADES WERE AS DULL AS THEIR WITS.



"A PEASANT FROM THE FRONTIER," THAT WAS ALL I KNEW. I TURNED EAST, TRAVELING BY NIGHT. JUSTINIAN'S MEN FOLLOWED."





ARN'S LETTER CONTINUES:

"A PEASANT FROM THE FRONTIER,' THAT WAS ALL I KNEW. THE NORTH ROMAN ROAD WAS INFESTED WITH JUSTINIAN'S PATROLS, AND I WAS NEARLY CORNERED AT THE CARAVANSERAI, WHERE I STOLE A CAMEL. I CUT SOUTH ALONG THE SANGARIUS RIVER AND PASSED A NIGHT IN THE SHADOW OF ANCIENT GORDIUM.



"MIDAS OF THE GOLDEN TOUCH RULED HERE, BUT THE ONLY GOLD I SAW WAS THE MORNING SUN ON THE FINE SAND THAT HIDES THE OLD PALACE.



"SOON I JOINED THE ROYAL PERSIAN ROAD, BUT A TROOP OF IMPERIAL CAVALRY WAS WAITING. ALL I COULD DO WAS ABANDON MY MOUNT AND CLIMB TO SAFETY. THE SOLDIERS TRIED TO FOLLOW, BUT THE WEIGHT OF THEIR ARMOR WORKED AGAINST THEM.



"ALONE AND ON FOOT I PUT THE MOUNTAINS BEHIND ME. NOW, YAWNING TO THE HORIZON, A VAST SALT LAKE STRETCHED AHEAD, SHALLOW BUT UNINVITING. MY LUNGS HEAVED FROM THE FUMES. HALFWAY ACROSS, I KNEW I WOULD NEVER MAKE IT.



"I DID NOT SEE THEM COME, THE STRONG, BEARDED MEN WHO TRAVELED ABOUT THE SALT LAKE AS IF IT WERE CAMELOT IN SPRING.

11-7

2387



"WHEN I AWOKE I WAS WHERE I AM NOW, AMONG THE CAVES OF THE GODS IN CAPPADOCIA. LIKE TERMITES THE MONKS HAVE CARVED THEIR CELLS AND CHAPELS INSIDE THE EARTH'S CRUSTY SPIRES. 'NO ONE COULD EVER FIND YOU HERE,' THE MONK CALLED BASIL SAID. 'I AM THE ABBOT. TELL ME WHAT YOU WERE FLEEING.'

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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for the taste of it!**

CAMPA ORANGE FLAVOUR - IT'S THE FLAVOUR OF FUN!

CBT 54 15



# A substitute for human beings?

The robot is one of the most exciting scientific developments today. Yet it's so hard to define this man-like machine. How is a robot different from any other automatic mechanism?

Human behaviour? No, because many industrial robots don't act and react like us. They work ten times as hard and fast, handle radioactive substances without injury, walk into furnaces, do more than one job at the same time.

Neither do all robots look human. Many robots used in car manufacture resemble giant steel birds, whose beaks spit out flames used in welding.

Maybe the answer lies in its ability to think. Its computer brain sends instructions to different parts of its body. It is programmed to get a particular job done, and can be reprogrammed for practically any other.

Scientists are working on robots that can see, touch and make decisions. In the near future lies the day when robots will begin to design and manufacture other robots. And raise large families!

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# WE CAN CROSS ALL HURDLES...

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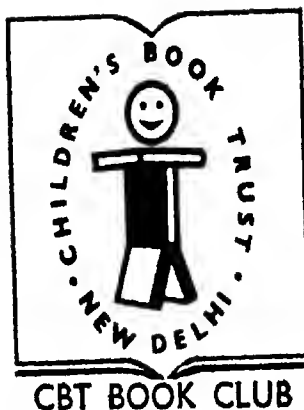


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TRENDS.S.C. 284

# Two-way Talk

*Dear Editor,*

Just as I am interested in reading *Children's World*, I have also been encouraging my friends to read it. Many of them were unfamiliar with the magazine, but then I persuaded them to read some issues from my collection, and now I bring to you some joyous news. They have all become your permanent subscribers! I hope our magazine reaches even higher pinnacles of success and we readers remain its strong pillars. Three cheers to *Children's World*.

*Harleen Sodhi, Chandigarh*

I was expecting a bulkier issue for the Annual Number, containing lots of poems, jokes, etc. The Pen-friends Corner was missing, too. But I must say, the articles made up for these shortcomings. It was heartening to find Perky's letter back among the features. The prizewinning story "The Cripple" was very moving. Inspector Garud's encounters are thrilling to the very end. I hope you will continue this serial.

*Shajee Joseph, Bhilai*

Congratulations on completing 15 years of *Children's World*. I must tell you that the recent issues have impressed me with their general orientation and richer contents, pleasing illustrations, and cover pictures. All warm wishes for a brighter future.

*Malati Deshpande, Bombay*

*Children's World* is really a superb (super, too) magazine. Each and every feature is fascinating. The photo-features are eye-pleasing. The magazine must have a fun page, jokes, Do-you-know, puzzles, etc.

*Aftab Husain Kola, Bhatkal*

My younger sister is missing "Kapish" very much. Please bring back the comics feature.

*Ila Janak Kumar, Salonibari*

*Dear Readers,*

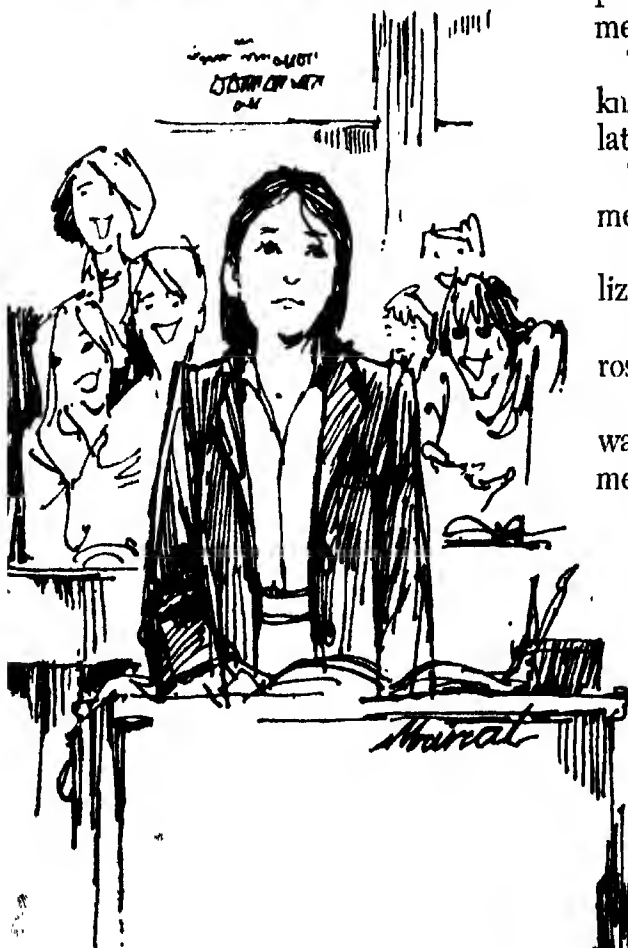
Thank you for the pat on the back you all have given us. It will goad us into giving you better and better issues, each an improvement on the previous ones. Because of certain unavoidable reasons, the Annual Number could not be made bulkier. Some of the features that had to be held over, as a result, now appear in this issue. The main attraction this month is the pictorial feature on the 31st Shankar's On-the-Spot Painting Competition held in Delhi on February 27. The three award-winning paintings appear in colour, besides photographs of the Competition, which had attracted over 15,000 children, and the subsequent exhibition of prize-winning and other selected entries. We are glad, the series on birds and marine life have found favour with our readers. To represent the animal world, we have chosen the horse, and you will find a novel feature on this handsome creature starting with this issue. Children are always attracted to flowers. You can look forward to a sequel to "The Wealth of Flowers" (see page 54) in yet another series that will tell you all about "Ikebana" and "Bonsai" — both of which originated in Japan. That takes us to a reader in Bombay, who describes how she learnt the Japanese language (see page 42). There is also a refreshing account of an Indian girl's experiences of a school in London. There must be many like her in schools in other countries. We hope they, too, will share their experiences with our readers. A delay in shipment has deprived us of "Prince Valiant" and "Ripley's Believe It or Not" for this issue. We assure you, our disappointment is no less than yours.

**EDITOR**





# A School in London



"NEW girl, eh?" A pair of curious eyes looked me up and down. Sitting in the school hall, I tried to appear as dignified and unassuming as I could, all in a minute. Nervously, I shut an exercise book — perhaps it wouldn't do to appear studious.

The close scrutiny continued. My pencil box was opened, the contents examined at great length and, finally, put down with a very decisive thud. Nobody in the hall was at work. All eyes had turned to me and the atmosphere seemed full of a silent expectancy. With equal suddenness, the deep, resonant voice of the girl broke the silence. "You a snob, eh?"

"No-o," I stammered, wondering how on earth I could appear conceited.

"What's this book doin' 'ere, then?" She lifted the object in question and acted like a detective holding a vital piece of evidence. So that was what she meant by 'snob'? I coloured.

"Trying to catch up past work, you know, because I've come a term late . . ."

"Past work?" her voice thundered over me.

"Oh, you mean them, notes?" — realization dawned.

"Stop talking posh, guy," the voice rose menacingly.

I held my peace. She chuckled and I was greatly relieved when the chuckle merged in the ringing of the school bell



and I was able to retreat hastily, wondering whether every girl I would meet would be like her.

The new school and its pupils had given me sleepless nights, but had also been a subject of much interest. First, because it was my first experience of schooling in England. Because my father gets transferred from one country to another every three years, it means that I have to keep changing from one school to another. This school was going to be the very first British school I had ever studied in. Secondly, every school has an atmosphere of its own, and I wondered what kind of teacher-pupil relationship would be prevailing in this one.

My first lesson of the week was English, taken by Mrs. Cox. She came up to me to enquire about the books I had read in my old school and to give me a copy of *'Wuthering Heights'* and *'To Kill a Mocking-bird'*. While she was addressing me, I stood up, giving all the respect I should to a teacher. A howl of laughter greeted me.

"Sit down, sit down," the teacher smiled broadly, gesticulating a downward movement with her hands. I did, but not before the row behind me was in splits of laughter.

"What did she do?" a girl from another corner of the class queried.

"She stood up," somebody behind me yelled out, barely able to stop laughing. General amusement spread over the whole class, and I smiled in a very sweet way, trying to cover up my embarrassment.

That was my first lesson about the informal attitude between teachers and pupils over here. We never said "Ma'am" to our teachers. We either addressed them by their names or could get away by saying "Miss". In a way, I

enjoyed this informality. If we met a teacher walking down the corridor, we would say "Hello . . .", and not "Good Morning . . .". Teachers would even sit on tables when they talked to us, and we were never ordered about. One thing that particularly struck me was the way we were treated with respect, being pupils of a senior school. Once when we were being noisy, the teacher said, "Right, ladies, will you be quiet, please?" It was a polite request that worked successfully. If it had been my old school in India, we would have been ordered, "Girls, stand up and keep standing till you are quiet."

You fall into the habit of saying 'please' and 'thank you' to everybody around. A common slang for 'thank you' is 'ta'. Even on the bus, when buying a ticket, you add 'please' at the end and 'thank you' on receiving it or receiving the change. Politeness is the norm everywhere and nobody is ordered about. Even teachers are polite to us when giving commands. "Will you please shut the door?"

My school is a 'comprehensive'. This means, it caters to all types of pupils, placing them into ability groups. The more capable do the 'O' level examinations, while the less capable do the 'C.S.E.' exams, which are much easier than the 'O' level. The 'O' level pupils are in Band I, which is further divided into three groups, while pupils taking the C.S.E. exams are in Band II, further divided into three groups. Thus, a student is among a peer group of similar ability. In slang terms, we are branded "Band I snobs" and "Band II toughs", tough because they are supposed to bully others and be anything but lady-like. These slang terms cannot be generalised, though they do hold true in many cases.

Form IV and Form V are the two-year preparation for 'O' level, which is equal to Std. IX and X in India. However, it is much more interesting and different out here. We don't have 'set' subjects; we have a choice. The 'O' level Band I choice in my school was between Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Sociology, Geography, Latin, German, Art, Needlework, Home Economics, and History, and there was provision even for Hindi/Urdu/Punjabi. Maths, English, and French are compulsory subjects, though instead of French, we could do classical studies, a study of the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations. The teaching of the subject made it exciting to learn. We had videos on different subjects and they would be shown to us to make the topics better understood. Instead of simply writing on a black-board, the teachers would also write on a slide with felt tips and project it on a screen. Study was made interesting with all these audio-visual aids. In the Biology laboratory, we had excellent specimens of bottled animals. In fact, we also had an 'animal room' where live species of little animals are kept. However, it used to stink, so we did not frequent it. When studying about the brain, the brain of a mouse was dissected in front of us. The same was done with a bull's eye, because it is so similar to the human eye.

Physical Education, or P.E., was also compulsory. The games played varied according to the different seasons. In summer, it was mostly outdoor games, such as tennis, rounders, athletics, and netball. We could choose between them. In spring and autumn, we had hockey, netball/volleyball, and a choice of indoor games. In winter, it was only indoor games. Generally, indoor games were played throughout the year —

table tennis, trampolining, gymnastics, circuit training, or indoor volleyball. Our P.E. kit consisted of a short blue P.E. skirt, and white T-shirt. Canvas shoes are called plimsolls or P.E. shoes in London, and coloured ones are called trainees!

One thing about this kind of a school is that you learn to be more self-reliant. In India, we would sit in one fixed classroom with set subjects, and different teachers would come to the class. Over here two persons do not necessarily have identical subjects, so we keep to different form-rooms for different lessons. A class here is commonly known as a form. We do have our own form-room, with a form teacher to mark attendance, but we only have to be there for morning and afternoon 'registration'.

Every school has its own rules. Heading the list in our school was "NO SMOKING". It does sound a rather odd rule in a girl's school, but since smoking is a common phenomenon in this society, the temptation is greater. The teachers are allowed to smoke only in the Staff room. 'No fights', and 'no swearing at teachers' are other rules. Even girls seem willing to come to blows if they disagree with one another. The remaining rules are similar to those in my school in India. There are some people who seem to delight in breaking rules, and they get detentions or suspensions and even expulsions.

One exciting thing about this society is the influence of computers in our daily lives. Home computers are common in the market, with a great choice. Therefore, computer studies has become an essential subject in every school. It is a difficult subject,

*(Turn to page 72)*



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### THE STORY SO FAR

Examinations are over, and Biju and Pratap heave a sigh of relief. As they plan a movie programme, 'police' Appu joins them. He had earned the nick-name after he had, like a daredevil, succeeded in separating two ruffians while they grappled with each other in front of their school. Appu rightly guesses, the idea of a movie must have come from P. Pratap (as he is popularly known among his friends, from the day he wet his pants, though he was then only a student of Class I). Appu has a more manly suggestion: why not remind their master, Rajasekhar, of his promise to take them on a picnic? Their classmates Smitha, Vinita, Gopi, and John approve enthusiastically, and they all troop into the Staff room. Rajasekhar asks them, where would they like to go? Smitha's choice is the Dam. But that is rather far away. Appu suggests Kali Hills. But who will want to go there even in

broad daylight? Rajasekhar mentions the ancient Koickal Palace, and there is general agreement. He also promises to get hold of the school bus and wants the children to meet him again the next morning to finalise the programme.

Back home, Pratap is disappointed as his mother is away shopping. He turns down his sister Beena's offer to make him tea, and goes to Appu's place. By the time he gets back home, Pratap has forgotten his tiff with Beena.

There is a surprise in store for the children the next morning, when Rajasekhar announces that their teacher, Sarada, will join them for the picnic. While they prepare a list of items they will bring from home, Rajasekhar says he'll carry his camera and Sarada her violin.

Sunday dawns. The children are all excited as they get into the bus — in an

orderly queue, as their master insists. They all forget themselves in singing and chatting till they reach Koickal Palace an hour-and-a-half later. As they move about the 17th century Palace, from one room to another, Rajasekhar tells them of its history. Later they adjourn to the park around. After a leisurely lunch, followed by some music

from Sarada, the children are allowed to roam about in the garden, with instructions to get back to the park in an hour's time. Appu, Pratap, Biju and John reach the nearby forest from where they have a good view of the Kali Hills. John wonders why people are so scared of the hills. Well, Pratap has a story to tell them.

### CHAPTER III : Kali Hills

AFTER his friends had settled down, Pratap began his narration: "The temple that you see there is very, very ancient. Nobody knows when it was actually constructed. Legend says, it was built by a sage who lived in these forests and observed penance.

"The idol there is of Bhadrakali, Goddess

Kali in her angry mood, immediately after she had killed the demon king, Darika. With fire-spitting eyes and a protruding tongue from which drips blood, the idol itself is said to be frightening to look at. No wonder nobody dared go there even for worship.

"In olden days, however, people used to go up to the valley below the hill and make





offerings to the goddess. It was believed that anyone who set foot on the hill with any intention other than worship would not return. That is why people refused to go beyond the valley.

"Not as if there were no brave men those days. Some people did try to go up to the temple. But the story goes that most of them were never seen again. And the few who got back did not live long. They vomitted blood before they breathed their last, within hours of their return

"Then came an Englishman, called Watson. He did not believe these stories. He wanted to raise a tea estate around the hill. He also planned to build a bungalow atop the hill and live there, managing his estate. So, he took the hill on lease from the then Maharajah.

"Watson's job was not easy. First of all, none of the local people would work for him. He offered to pay them lavishly. But people were afraid to go and work on the hill which, they thought, really belonged to the goddess.

"Finally, Watson had to bring labourers from the neighbouring states. They happily accepted the job. Of course, they had not heard the stories about the hill or the goddess. Watson put them up in tents pitched in the valley. He also ensured that they did not mix with the local people.

"Work progressed steadily. A part of the forest was cleared and tea planted. Watson also started work on his bungalow near the temple.

"The local people watched all this activity with curiosity mixed with fear. But nothing untoward happened. Even the bungalow was completed soon. Watson decided to throw a party the day he was moving in with his wife. Several European friends of the Watsons came to attend the party. The workers were also to be given a feast, before they went



back to their villages. He wanted some of them to stay back and work in the bungalow and the estate.

"The local people, naturally, wondered whether Watson had finally secured the favour of Goddess Kali. Some of the younger generation even doubted whether all the stories that went round were not mere superstition. A large majority, however, still believed that Watson's might be just a temporary glory.

"And they were proved right! On the night of the party, both Watson and his wife fell from their terrace and died. How they fell was a mystery. Anyway, that put an end to the tea estate idea. The labourers went back home, and the hill remained an object of awe for all the people around.

"Three years later, a daring young man said he would go and live in the deserted bungalow. People told him, it might be haunted. But he did not care. He even invited his friends to join him, though none accepted his invitation.

"So, one day, he went with his few belongings to live in the haunted house. He reached there around noon. In the evening, just before sunset, he stood on the terrace and waved his handkerchief to the villagers who watched him from the valley. That night everyone kept wondering what would happen to the young adventurer. Nobody knows what really happened, but the man was never seen or heard of after that.

"All these are stories of the past. Nobody, who had seen these happenings is alive today. About 20 years ago, a team of three went to find out the truth about these stories. They went in a jeep as far as the vehicle could take them. Then they set out on foot. But as soon as they started climbing, one of them slipped and fell. He broke his leg and was unable even to get up. So, they had to

return to take him to hospital. That was the end of their adventure.

"This incident is interpreted both ways. Some say, the man fell because the goddess resented any disturbance to her peace. But, slipping down and falling are quite natural events while climbing, that's what others say.

"Nobody knows the truth. It is a fact, a large majority of people believe, that it is dangerous to go there. They say that strange noises, frightening screams of human beings, and the cries of different animals can be heard from the hills at night. Many also say that little balls of fire, sometimes red, sometimes blue, can be seen moving round the temple, especially on the tall palm trees. According to them, they are all evil spirits wandering in the night."

"All nonsense!" said 'police' Appu suddenly. "There is nothing like evil spirits anywhere. And gods and goddesses don't kill anyone. Whosoever kills a human being can only be another human being, or a beast, and not a god!"

"You can say that," countered Biju with equal vehemence. "Then, why is it that nobody dares go there?"

"Because all are, like you, without a backbone! I'll go there one of these days. And I'll show you that all these stories are just rubbish."

"Appu! John! Come back," came the voice of their master. "It's time we started back."

"So soon? Is the picnic over? Time seems to be flying!" said John.

"Let's get back. We've had a nice time," said Appu, as they walked back.

He would not have said that if he had known what was in store for them.

Radhakrishnan





*Dear beans and sprouts,*

The first thing you must remember, as you read what comes after this, is that whatever you may feel or think, and whatever others may tell you and however strange it all sounds, I... I forget what I was about to say. Anyway, you are all on my side, aren't you? Right—that's what I wanted to know.

Another thing—about sisters. Well, I suppose they have some sort of right to be born but, frankly, I wish there could be more girls than sisters in the world.

Where was I? Oh yes—collecting specimens of soil. We had hundreds—not quite. So many, but a lot—yes. All arranged on my desk, as I told you. We also had a huge book. Something like a class register—which Raghu had got (he said, some pages had been used, but there were many left) and we used it for writing down whatever we wanted to say about the specimens we collected. We would mark the envelope with a

number and write the number—the same number, mind—in the register and then write down something about the collection—like this:

No. Collected from	Soil contains
10. garden of painter man at	powders of different colours
10.02 a.m.	and old, broken paint brush.

You understand now?

Of course, it was a bit of dirty work all this, but science, you know. Science is a hard class teacher or whatever they say.

Now, one day, when we had collected a sample and I was writing about it—I always did the writing because, every time Raghu writes, he makes a blot—well, I was writing when Raghu suddenly said, "It's no good."

I turned round and saw him sitting with his hands on his head. "It's no good," he said again.

"What's no good?" I asked, a little

impatiently. A scientist, writing notes, doesn't have time to talk about goodness and other things.

"This," he replied with a wave of his hand, that included my books, the window and me.

"You me . . . mean . . . ." I stam—stam—stammered.

"I mean all our work, collecting specimens and all that," he said. "It's no good."

I stared at him aghast. (I like that word, don't you? It makes the right sound—aghast). So I stared at him aghast.

"You mean . . ." I stammered again.

"Yes, yes, all this," he said with another wave. What we need is a microscope."

"A microscope?"

"Can't you stop talking like a parrot?" yelled Raghu.

I ask you—where do I talk like a parrot? I mean, parrots repeat things you say, and I . . . . .

"A microscope," said Raghu again. "So we can really see our specimens."

"But we can see them even now," I said quite puzzled.

And then a horrible thought struck me and I was aghast again. "I say, Raghu, is there anything wrong? I mean you know this is me, don't you? And this is a pen—see—I mean, hold it and you can . . ."

"Tchch," yelled Raghu and flung the pen straight out of the window where it sank into its own blot on the lawn. I did not really mind because, if he could do that, it meant he could see the window right. He wasn't blind or anything.

"I mean a microscope," he yelled, "so that we can see the bacteria



and composition of the soil."

"You mean bacteria?" I asked. "Like what gives us a cold? Look," I said, "I know it's science and all that, but I don't really like to have a cold."

....Well, I saved the inkpot, but I couldn't save my poor ears. I had to listen to a whole lot of deep sea names that he called me, plus a lecture on soil composition and pattern and design. You think mud could have gone on being plain and simple mud, but no—it must give itself airs. Composition, indeed! Why not an essay?

Anyway, the result was, we both sunk into gloom because we did not have a microscope—I realised how we could not move another step before we got ourselves a microscope and all our years—rather—days of untiring work was to be lost if we did not get a microscope.

"Can't we— can't we buy one?" I asked a little hesitantly. My ears were

still burning.

"Buy?" he yelled. Really, Raghu is getting to be more and more like Captain Haddock. "You know how much it costs?"

I had a sudden picture of me, looking wan and starved, begging, pleading for money to buy a microscope. All for the sake of science. And some rich man would have tears in his eyes when he saw how devoted I was to science and he would. . . .

"I'm off," announced Raghu. "I'll try and think of a plan."

It was very pleasant after he left. I stared out of the window and dreamt the same dream—of the rich man who was so touched by my singleminded devotion that he announced he would build a whole laboratory for me where I could continue my work, and I said again and again, no, I only want a microscope, and then he. . . .

Hey, what was this? I blinked. I



shook my head. I rubbed my ears. There it was again. "PSSSST". And again, "PSSSST". Was it my millionaire benefactor already? I leaned out of the window and caught sight of the one eye and one ear of Raghu before they, too, disappeared. But he uttered one word before I saw him no more.

"Hide," he said.

Hide? Hide what? Or hide myself? There was another sound. From the gate this time. Angry sounds. My mother, Raghu's mother, his sister. . . .

I dived under the table and pulled down the tablecloth to hide me. Just in time. They came in, Rita leading of course, saying, "I know it's here, I'm sure it's here," and then triumphantly, "Here it is—didn't I tell you?"

And then the mothers, taking that something from Rita and saying in horrified tones, "How could they? How could they? And just look at all the mud in it? Mud, I tell you."

And then Rita shouted, "I can see his chappals." And she tugged at the tablecloth—quite the wrong thing to have done and the entire table or rather the things on the table including the inkpot came down on me in one blinding, rushing, torrent of mud, envelopes, and ink.

There's nothing much more to tell. It seems the register we had been using was some very, very important book belonging to Raghu's father's friend, and all the anger that came down on Raghu and me could have burnt down a whole laboratory, microscope, and all.

*Yours ag-hast*

*Perky*

## "My dear Perky"

*Hello Perky,*

I was delighted to see your letter. I had actually made some posters depicting your disappearance. Unfortunately, instead of hanging them on the lamp posts, I stuck them on the walls of my room. Quite foolish of me, isn't it? Anyway, it doesn't matter now, as you have returned. By the way, you didn't tell us where you had been absconding so long. Write about your adventures next time. Bye.

*Sheeba Joseph, Bhilai*

*Hello She-Sheeba,*

Do you really mean to say you have posters of me on the walls of your room and you see me last thing at night? Wow! And to think my mother says I give her nightmares. I am sure all your days are glorious because you do see me first thing in the morning, don't you? Me? I use a mirror.

*Reflectively yours*

*Per-Perky*

*Dear, Dearer, Dearest Perky,*

So, you've arrived at last. At last you've made your long-awaited appearance. In fact, you should have seen the ocean of tears that flowed thro' the house. Thank god, because of a water shortage, my tears went un-noticed. Wh—where on earth were you? Wh—what on earth were you doing? Were you really on earth? Anyway, I well and truly regard you as my younger brother (or is it the other way round?). Don't worry, my mischiefs, like yours and Raghu's, are regarded all over the neighbourhood as something out of the

*(Turn to page 64)*

# The Wheel of Destiny

ONCE upon a time, there lived a merchant, called Dhanapal. He was extremely proud of his wealth and position in society. Though the people were polite to him, no one really liked him very much, because he was often unfair, mean, and unscrupulous in money matters.

Dhanapal was fond of parading his wealth, so he often threw grand parties and banquets, inviting all the important people of the town. These were joyous occasions for poor people, who flocked at his backdoor and collected all leftover food.

An orphan boy lived not far away from Dhanapal's house. When both his parents died of a sudden illness, leaving him all alone in the world, no one volun-

teered to take care of him. Little Somdutt slept under the trees and lived on the food thrown away from Dhanapal's house. The servants liked the little boy and always kept some tit-bits for him.

One morning, as Somdutt sat under a tree eating his breakfast of leftovers, two men passed by talking among themselves. One of them was a well-known astrologer. "Just look at the cruelty of Destiny," said the other man. "Here's Dhanapal, rolling in more money than he knows what to do with and getting richer every day; just by his side is this little boy, fair enough to be a prince yet living on leftover food."

"Don't let either instance dishearten you," said the astrologer with a smile.



"The wheel of Destiny is never still and has its own way of bringing about justice."

"How?" said the other man curiously.

"You will be surprised if I tell you what fate is in store for these two. It may be years, but this little beggar will one day come to possess all of Dhanapal's wealth!"

"Strange!" said the other man. "But how can that be? Dhanapal is not childless. He has a son and a daughter, too. Why should he adopt a beggar?"

"I can't tell you how exactly Destiny will bring it about, but I know for certain that it'll be so."

Unknown to them, Dhanapal was, at that moment, standing near the window, and overheard all that was said by the two men. At first he laughed scornfully. 'Destiny, indeed! As if anything on earth would induce me to adopt that cursed little beggar, handsome though he might be. Of course, they were talking nonsense. Utter nonsense!' mused Dhanapal. However, a feeling of uneasiness haunted him from that day. At last he made up his mind that he would take no chances. He sent for a butcher and asked him to take Somdutt inside a deep forest and kill him there. "And you must show me the blood-stained dagger after you have done the deed. Else I shall not pay you," he added.

It was not difficult to take Somdutt to the forest. He was only four years old and had not, as yet, learnt to doubt or distrust people. The butcher asked Somdutt to follow him if he wanted to see something wonderful. Somdutt cheerfully trotted along behind him, holding the butcher's hand with a confident smile.

The butcher was, after all, a human being, and little Somdutt, with his

angelic smile, won his heart completely. By the time they reached the heart of the forest, Somdutt had fallen asleep from exhaustion. The butcher left him under a tree, killed a fox, and took the blood-stained dagger to Dhanapal.

An old milkman called Govinda lived in the same forest. He was returning home with his cattle when he saw the sleeping child under a tree. He was too astonished for words. How could such a little boy come to the forest all alone? Govinda was a childless man. He had visited all the shrines in the country, beseeching the gods to bless him with a son. He now felt that the boy was a gift from Lord Siva himself.

He picked up the sleeping child and took him home. His wife was beside herself with joy when she saw the little boy. "Whose child is he?" she cried. "Isn't he a little angel?"

"He is a gift from the gods," said Govinda. "I am sure you'll be happy now."

"He looks like a little prince!" said his wife rapturously. "Are you sure his people won't come and take him away?"

Somdutt was awake now. When he heard them, he said, "I've no one of my own and no one wants me either. I would love to stay with you here."

Years flew by. Somdutt was a young man now, the adored darling of the old couple. He looked after the cattle and took over all of Govinda's work. They lived a quiet and peaceful life in the forest and asked nothing more of life.

One evening, Dhanapal happened to pass by the same forest and his eyes fell on young Somdutt who was taking the cattle home. Dhanapal recognised him instantly and asked him who he was. "I am the son of Govinda, the milkman," said Somdutt.

"Really?" said Dhanapal looking at

him closely. "Please take me to your father, will you?"

Somdutt took him home to Govinda who was astonished to see Dhanapal. His contempt for people poorer than he was well known. But Govinda welcomed him humbly.

"I understand that this young man is your son, Govinda," Dhanapal said without any preamble.

"Yes, sir," said Govinda.

"But I thought you were childless," said Dhanapal. "I certainly remember being told so, some years ago."

"God decided to be kind to us rather late in life," agreed Govinda.

"I want an urgent message to be sent home," said Dhanapal. "Could your son carry the letter?"

"Of course, sir," said Govinda, overwhelmed by Dhanapal's attention.

Dhanapal wrote a letter to his son, urging him to give poison to the bearer of the letter—at once, and see to it

that everything was over before he returned home. He added that it was extremely important and that there should be no hesitation about it.

Somdutt carried the letter not knowing what it contained. By the time he reached Dhanapal's hometown, it was dusk and he was dead tired. He sat under a tree intending to rest for a few minutes, but he was so exhausted that he promptly fell asleep.

Just then one of the court-dancers passed by and she stopped in surprise on seeing the sleeping youth. He was so very handsome. She then caught sight of the letter lying beside him. She opened it out of curiosity and read the contents. A mischievous smile broke on her face. She hated Dhanapal. She had hated him ever since he had grabbed her father's property by unlawful means. Here was a good chance to pay him back. She took up the letter once again. Poison is called 'Veesh' in Sanskrit and Dha-



napal's daughter's name was Veesha. The letter was written in red ink. The lady pricked her finger with a thorn and added an "a" after "Veesh", writing it with her own blood. Veesha was the apple of her father's eyes. Now she would be married to the man Dhanapal was bent upon killing!

Somdutt woke up after a while and hurried to the house of Dhanapal. Dhanapal's son read the letter and called him inside. 'Give Veesha to this young man immediately,' his father had written. He was given a set of new clothes. The priest was sent for, and Somdutt and Veesha were married in an hour's time.

When Dhanapal came home the next day and heard everything, he could not guess who had tampered with his letter. Somdutt could not have done it, as he did not know how to read or write. Dhanapal was full of wrath, though he kept it to himself.

'I'll kill you yet, you beggar!' he muttered to himself. Then he sent for Somdutt and told him that he should go and worship at the family temple at once. He had already posted a man there with orders to kill ANYONE who entered the temple, whosoever it might be.

Somdutt was about to go when Dhanapal's son met him. "Where are you going?" he asked Somdutt.

"To the temple," said Somdutt. "Father said I must go at once."

"Then go and fetch Veesha," said her brother. "I'm sure she would also like to go for worship with you. I shall proceed first and await you both."

When Dhanapal saw Somdutt coming back to the house he was enraged. "Haven't you gone to the temple yet?" he shouted.

"Your son asked me to take Veesha

with me. I've just come to fetch her."

"And where is my son?" asked Dhanapal turning white.

"In the temple, waiting for us," said Somdutt.

Dhanapal gave a piercing shriek and ran towards the temple. But it was too late. His son lay at the door in a pool of blood. His lifeless eyes seemed to stare at him accusingly. Dhanapal cursed himself and tore his hair. 'You shall die, Somdutt!' he cried. 'You shall, you shall!'

That evening, Dhanapal got two plates of fruits. He poisoned one lot of fruits and gave the plates to his wife. "These are special fruits," he told her. "When we have our supper, give the gold plate to your son-in-law and the silver one to me."

"Very well," said his wife and took the fruits. When they sat down to eat, she thought it very silly to serve her husband in a silver plate when there were so many gold plates at home. So she served them in identical gold plates. She happened to give the poisoned fruits to Dhanapal, not knowing that they were poisoned.

Dhanapal fell in a swoon as soon as he ate the fruits. He never got up. The entire house was plunged in grief. Somdutt inherited all of Dhanapal's property and wealth but, unlike him, he lived a life of peace and generosity and was greatly loved by all.

"Do you think it was the wheel of Destiny punishing my father?" Veesha asked her husband.

"I don't know about Destiny," said Somdutt. "But I do know that no good can be born of evil. If we are good and lead a useful life, God will bless us."

Veesha agreed. They lived a happy, useful life.

Bubble



# FIRE! FIRE!

**I**T seemed as if the sun was going to set the whole world on fire. So hot was the summer of '58.

Even the elders of Sothurandikada village, near Tanjore, couldn't remember a summer as hot and fierce.

The dry earth was cracked and scarred and the grass was singed and burnt. The cattle groaned with thirst and the wells were almost dry.

Murugayyan sat in the shade of the tamarind tree and looked at the glimmering sky. He sighed heavily and ran his tongue over his dry lips. Even the half-shirt and the lungi he was wearing seemed too warm in that heat. He wished he could jump into the sea and swim for ever. But Madras and the sea

were hundreds of miles away. Murugayyan dug his toes into the hot red dust. What heat! Everything he touched was fiercely hot and cracked or crackled with dryness. The village was asleep.

Suddenly, a cry tore the glimmering air. "Fire! Fire!"

Murugayyan leaped to his feet and dashed off. As he ran, he folded his lungi expertly and tucked it into his waist.

"Fire! Fire!"

Fire, oh god, now in summer, now in this heat, without sufficient water, when everything was bone dry?

Murugayyan clutched his stomach. He whizzed down the unpaved road past the grocery store of Hassan Ali.



"Run!" cried Murugayyan from a distance. "Run for help and water."

The fat grocer threw up his short arms in despair. "Allah is punishing us," he cried, "Allah is punishing us!" He struggled to his feet and shut the windows and doors of his store.

From every hut, from all sides of the village people were streaming out, rushing towards the temple behind which Murugayyan saw tongues of flame shoot up into the sky.

Women shrieked. Children cried. And the men ordered: "Water, water! We need water!"

More and more people crowded the street, running heedlessly, helplessly, shouting: "Fire, fire! We are lost! The whole village will be burned to the ground!"

For the second time that day, Murugayyan felt his stomach sink. He knew, if the wind picked up, the whole village would turn into an inferno.

"Oh god!" he prayed. "Help!"

He stumbled over a fleeing dog, crashed into an old man who pulled himself away from the fire on his crutches. Murugayyan charged on. He whizzed past the temple and soon reached the hut of Annamalai. Nearly half the village had gathered around, at a safe distance, watching with horror the flames rising.

"Water, water!" cried the men.

"Bring every vessel there is in the village!"

"Bring all the water buckets you can get!"

"Make a line and fetch the water!"

Suddenly men, women, and children were rushing for containers of all sizes and shapes.

Murugayyan heard the men shout: "Come, let everybody line up. Form a line, like this, you hear? Only then will we get the water fast enough. Form a line and fetch the water."

Murugayyan was about to rush back for vessels, when the terrorised shriek of a woman paralysed him.

"Selvaraj, Selvaraj! My child, my child!"

A woman in a plain sari pointed at the house and screamed once again. "Selvaraj, oh god!" Then she fell into the arms of a young woman next to her and clung to her desperately, as her feet seemed to give way. She cried desperately, nearly hysterically, "My boy, my boy! Save my child! Oh god!"

Murugayyan hesitated only for a second. He looked at the rising wall of flames, the giant wheel of fire that was once a hut. The fire had broken through the straw roof, eating the wood-and-mud hut. Masses of grey smoke billowed high, into the sky. He watched the angry flames hit the bottom of the ground and lash out, in its search to satisfy its hunger.

"Ammal! Ammal!"

The feeble cry from inside the house tore Murugayyan's heart. He dashed through the crowd of immobilized people and shouted: "Save the child, save the child!"

He pushed past weeping children, hesitating men, who just stood there, looking at the burning house uneasily.

"Get the child out of the hut!"

Nobody moved but Murugayyan.

He jumped towards the door of the hut. He plunged his arms through the flames, feeling for an opening to enter

the hut. His hair and eyebrows were singed. He withdrew, coughing and panting. Instinct told him to run for his life. But Murugayyan shook his head. No. Clenching his fists, he began to breathe in deeply.

The fire whipped his face and chest. Murugayyan felt his nose and ears burn, his legs and arms begin to sear.

He dashed into the house with closed eyes, his hands feeling his way. Only when he was inside the hut did he dare open his eyes to a small slit, pressing his lips tightly together.

He scanned the room desperately, looked at a cot, some boxes and tins, all aflame and blazing red. There, by the only bed in the room, crouched a little figure, crying, shielding its face with its arms.

Murugayyan was by the little boy's side in a second. He drew him into his arms, pressing the burning face against his shoulder. He wished he could talk to him, whisper a few consoling words, but he dared not. For, if he had, hot air

would have rushed into his lungs, and hurt him.

He jumped to his feet and towards what had been a door a few minutes ago. But before he could reach it, a shower of burning straw rained down on him.

Murugayyan felt the burning straw eat into his skin, into his clothes, into his hair. He almost cried out in pain, but checked himself at the last minute. His oxygen-starved lungs longed to take a free breath. He had to breathe, just couldn't do anything else. 'Two more steps,' thought Murugayyan, 'just one more, then...'

He dived through the door, leaped through the flames, and was outside in a flash. His cheeks seared, his arms stung as he broke through the wall of flames again. Then he stumbled, opened his eyes and greedily sucked in air in great gasps. He swayed and coughed and screamed out for help.

Suddenly, there were helping hands all around him. He felt the little boy



being lifted off his arm and heard his agonising scream followed by his mother's outcry: "Selvaraj! My child!"

Panting hard, Murugayyan sank into the arms of someone standing nearby, gasping, struggling for breath. Slowly, fearing the worst, he touched his face hesitantly. His ears, nose, the whole face was burned, but luckily there were no blisters. He sighed and closed his eyes.

Only for a moment, and then he was up again, fighting the blazing fire along with the others, pulling bucket after bucket from the well, sending it down the long line of people from one hand to another. He carried the water till his hands stung and his back ached, in his effort to save what could be saved of Annamalai's hut, to save the village.

For, if the evening breeze were to set in now, it would mean the end of every hut and shed in Sothurandikada.

The people worked feverishly and silently. For a moment, nothing else could be heard except the crackling of the flames and the swishing of water as it soaked into the simmering straw.

And then, finally, the fire died down, smouldering and smoking. The people dropped their vessels and buckets and gazed exhausted at the remains of Annamalai's hut, then looked down at their lungis, all dirty and wet.

Then they stared at each other and the lean boy amongst them, who with his mere fifteen years had done what would have been each and every man's duty.

Silently they dropped their hands on his shoulder. Murugayyan looked at

them and nodded. "We've saved the village. Thank god!"

The villagers, too nodded, and an old man, leaning heavily on his crutches, said what was already in the minds of the others.

"We all have helped to save the village, but you've done more; you've saved a child!"

Sigrun Srivastava

(A true story)



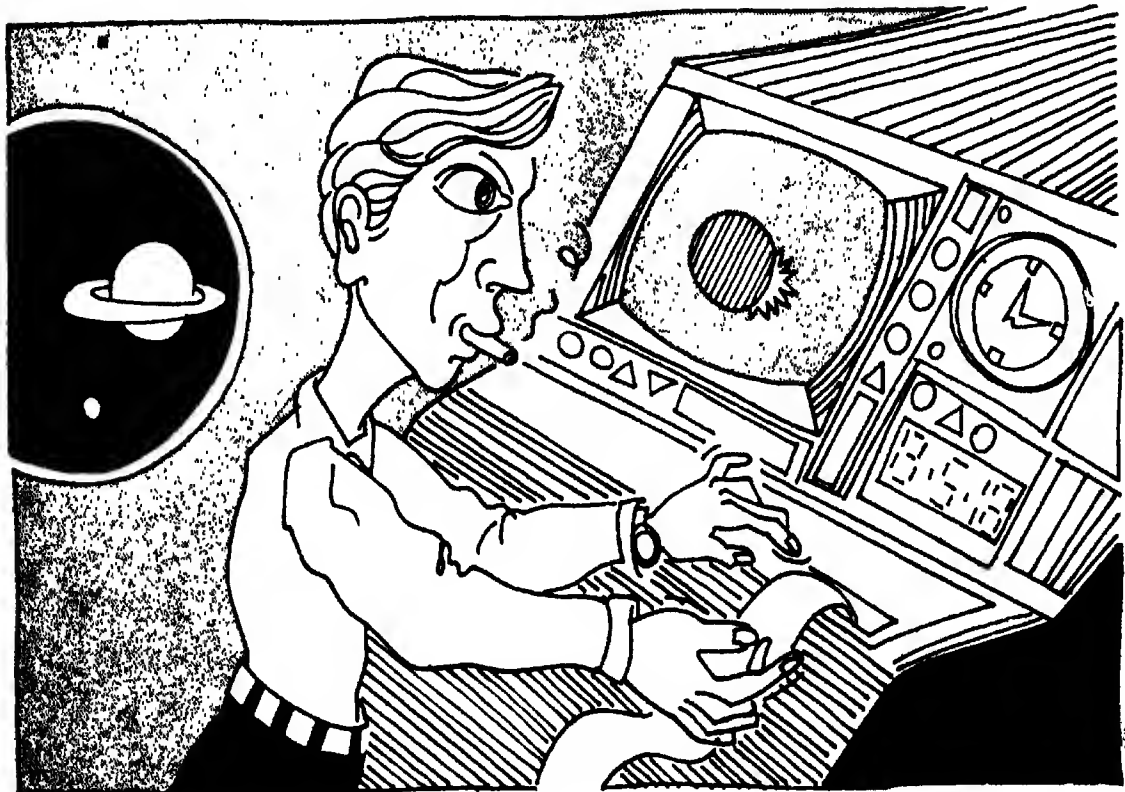
"Doctor, my pussy can't see properly, and she is not able to catch rats. Please prescribe glasses for her."

# When the Sun Was Abducted...

THE giant tubular telescope atop the *Scilab*, a research spaceship, swung about on its axis and then stayed put. In a small cabin, right below the telescope, a TV-like screen showed where the telescope was pointing. It was looking at the bright star, *Bootes*, which the earth, a round disc, was about to eclipse. The astronomer closely watching the TV-like screen was 22-year-old Gary Zukov. The purpose of his present study was to determine the composition of the earth's atmosphere! Sounds absurd—doesn't it—when the exact composition of the earth's atmosphere had already been known for more than a century? That was why Zukov's friends and colleagues used to laugh at his research work. But Zukov himself was sure about what he

was doing. His research work concerned that much ridiculed subject — extraterrestrial intelligence.

Determining the gaseous content of the earth's atmosphere was Zukov's first experiment aboard the *Scilab*. He also intended to study the amount of light reflected by the earth's surface, the electromagnetic waves emitted by the electrical installations on the earth's surface, all factors which might reveal to an intelligent extraterrestrial the presence of intelligent life on the earth. In other words, Zukov was keen to find out whether there was anything so unusual about the earth itself that no extraterrestrial intelligence had contacted the human race even in the 21st century. He was, in fact, one of



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the few scientists keen to discover these facts, because about 50 years ago, the enthusiasm for such studies had died down following the failure to contact a single extraterrestrial even after spending a large amount of money and time to send messages on radio waves across the solar system and the galaxy. Zukov was now working along novel lines, by practically studying the conditions in which an extraterrestrial would find itself. Only for the novelty of his research project had he been given a berth aboard the sophisticated research spaceship *Scilab*. But, as was expected, his research work was always scoffed at and given much low priority.

Zukov turned a knob on the panel behind the TV-like screen and the round, pearly blue magnified image of the earth became clearer. The bright star, *Bootes*, slowly edged towards the earth, as he looked at the digital clock on the panel. When the clock struck 8:5:15, he switched on the spectrometer — an instrument meant for determining the chemical composition of a body. For the next half-a-minute, he knew that the atmosphere of the earth would appear between the starlight and the telescope. The starlight would interact with the gaseous content of the terrestrial atmosphere and provide information on the gaseous content which the spectrometer would analyse. It was the same aeons-old techniques used for determining the gaseous content of planets by observing how they eclipse a bright star.

In due course, *Bootes* went behind the earth and came from the other side. At 8:5:18, when the eclipse was over, Zukov switched off all the buttons except that of the computer which had begun to analyse the spectrometer's readings. He had then nothing else to do except to wait for the results. He, therefore, pulled out a cigarette, lighted it and, taking a few puffs, began to admire the scene outside the big round porthole on his right.

In the jet black star-studded panorama

outside the porthole, there was only one object that drew his attention. It was the pale yellow roundish Saturn and the mysterious rings encircling it. From close quarters, the light belts and blotches on the surface of the planet were also seen. "Oh, Saturn, everything is for you!" muttered Zukov to himself, cursing the team of astronomers who were studying the planet and were, therefore, giving him less time on the giant telescope to conduct his own extraterrestrial studies. In fact, he felt that all the astronomers and scientists, including the Director of the *Scilab*, had joined hands to give him as little time on the telescope as possible. Most of them laughed at his research project, claiming that if nobody knew the kind of alien intelligence one was likely to encounter, his research work would be useless. His unhappy reverie was broken when a bell sounded. In the panel, a sentence blinked at him: RESULTS READY.

Zukov pushed another button on the panel and, through a slit, a printed paper rolled out and fell on his knees. On it was printed the gaseous content of the terrestrial atmosphere at various altitudes from the surface of the earth. As he scanned the results to make sure that everything was okay, he found, to his astonishment, something out of the ordinary.

At several altitudes from the surface of the earth, there was, so it seemed, no gas! Instead, the results showed some metals! 'How could this be possible?' Zukov asked himself, as he found that the altitudes indicated were too high to be showing the presence of any aircraft or satellite over the earth at the time the experiment was conducted. He, therefore, pressed another button on the panel for a recheck of the reading and their analysis, but the results were the same as before. The experiment had to be conducted again, he realised, but he knew he could not do so rightaway. The *Scilab* had to be re-aligned, so that the earth



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would eclipse another bright star in its neighbourhood. For that, he had to seek the permission of the Director. Besides, the time allotted to him on the telescope was also running out. 'What if, in case, the results are correct?' he wondered. Though this seemed out of the question, he thought it would certainly excite the Director's curiosity. With this idea in mind, he rushed towards the Director's room which was two storeys below his observatory cabin.

The Director, a bespectacled person with a goatee, was lounging in an arm-chair as he puffed at his pipe. Having eaten his dinner, he was planning to read a novel and then lie down to sleep. He was rather irritated when Zukov pressed his call bell.

"Please come in," the Director said, sitting where he was. "The door is open."

When he saw Zukov entering the room at that untimely hour, a scowl appeared on his

face. "Yes, Zukov, what's the problem? You look as if you are upto...."

"Yes, yes, Dr. Saxena," replied Zukov, forgetting to wish him and breathing heavily. "I've come across something unusual. See the printout of the results."

"What? Unusual?" asked the Director in an amused tone. "Don't show me your results. Tell me, what have you found so unusual about the earth? What's it? Be brief."

After Zukov had told him of his findings, the Director simply took the pipe out of his mouth, removed the burnt tobacco from it, refilled it, and lit it. Exhaling a few puffs of smoke, he said, "So you think something extraordinary is happening on the earth - isn't it?"

"No, Dr. Saxena, I don't...." Zukov began, but the Director cut in.

"Okay, I accept that your findings are

foolproof. Tell me, how would you interpret them?"

"Dr. Saxena, I'm at a loss to understand the findings..." said Zukov, unable to explain, because he had never thought the results could be correct, "but I would suggest we better recheck. I suggest we re-align the Scilab."

"What're you talking, Zukov?" the Director almost shouted. "No! No! That's not possible! You know very well that there are other important experiments going on board the Scilab? No! No! Not now!"

Zukov knew his work was at no time given any importance, because there was hardly any practical application of it. He, therefore, did not insist further. Saddened at heart, he was about to say 'good night' and leave the room, when Dr. Saxena said in a cajoling tone, "Why do you need to re-align the Scilab, Zukov, when we can know rightaway if anything unusual is happening on the earth...?"

"But, Dr. Saxena..."

"Moreover, I too want to watch today's news. It's already 8:30, and here's the TV. Come on, Zukov, sit down, and let's watch. Maybe we can get something there."

Zukov resignedly sat down on the sofa facing the TV, knowing full well that the Director only wanted to pacify him.

Dr. Saxena switched on the TV and joined him on the sofa. The news bulletin had almost begun. Soon the face of the news-reader appeared on the screen. He read matter of factly:

*"This is Earthscan News Services. Alien ships are here! As reported in our previous bulletin, astronomers at the Kitt Peak National Observatory, in Hawaii, and other observatories have detected a strange cloud in the Aquila constellation only a few hours ago. The cloud was in due course found to be composed of millions of metallic particles. It was, however, only in the last hour or so that astronomers found*

*through their powerful telescopes that the particles were nothing but alien ships approaching the earth at fantastic speeds. Half-an-hour ago, the first batch of these alien ships reached the earth and have since caused devastation wherever sighted. Astronomers believe that a majority of the alien ships are still far away from the earth and are a part of that cloud which is, it seems, presently heading for the sun. Experts believe that the ships that have already been to the earth and are still seen on the earth are combat ships of aliens meant to suppress any attack coming from us. To give you an idea of the havoc the alien ships have caused wherever they were sighted, we take you to the New York harbour. Over to David Hughes..."*

It took some time for the scene to shift. In the meantime, Zukov and Dr. Saxena exchanged glances. Both were so stunned that they could not utter a single word.

Dilip M. Salwi

(To be concluded)







# ON THE SPOT I WAS...

those who belonged, the insiders, were grinning happily. It was the others who were making the noise, the ice-cream man, the hawkers, the parents. The others, who like me, were completely lost.



If only paint brushes and drawing boards had voices? Ha! Why not? My drawing board has a voice like the doctor's, warm and comforting. And you should hear my paint brushes. My No. 5 is squeaky like a mouse, and No. 9 sounds like choconut ice-cream. And you call that deafening?!



At last, the shamiana and the gates. The insiders are treated like royalty—each one might be a king or a queen with a jewel crown. They are ushered in, gently, warmly, and we are shooed away like so many irritating sparrows.



At last! At last! We've reached! There's the shamiana. Gosh! look at the crowd! Come on, let's get a good place. Hey! Mind that drawing pin of yours. It's poking me! What did you say? Like exams? What rubbish. It's fun. Oh, thank you. Thanks very much, I'll go this way.



And so they have gone in. And we wait outside, peering over the barri-

**I** WAS an outsider. And there was nothing to be done about it. I was being pushed by drawing boards, bags, the sharp edge of a paint brush, by determined little fists, and I could not push them back nor shout. After all, I did not belong there.



In the beginning, it is always like the exams—a little bit. All those grown-ups telling you to go here and go there, and parents looking flustered. "Be sure to come out of this gate, I shall wait here for you," one says. "Don't get lost," says another. As if anyone ever wants to get lost.



What a terrible, deafening noise! If drawing boards and paint brushes had voices, it could not have been much worse. But strangely enough, most of

cedes, wistfully like Alice did through the keyhole. It is like a fairyland out there, the sun washing over the jewels, red, green, blue, purple, pink, green, orange, black, and dazzling eyespots of white.



Come on! They are giving the question papers! It's not like exams, yaar! Whoopee! I'm going to paint everything. Time? There's plenty of time. Wait here, I'll get some water—from over there. That big drum. Come on, come on, let's start.



And now those whites are seas, rivers, continents of colour. Big splashes, gen-



erous, happy-go-lucky pools, and dabs and smears of colour. Look at that grey—how vibrant, glowing. He's mixed the black with some white. How can I ever call a day grey any more? Not if it is like this—anything but dull.



Brown's easy. Brown's like chocolate. But I like black best. It's so sure of itself. Knows exactly where to go, and what to do. And it makes nice eyes, if you leave the middle white. Hey! I've ruined my sleeves. Never mind.



Perhaps if I walked into one of those paintings, I could belong again. If I could touch and smell and taste that green, or that rich pink or sleep on that velvet blue—but heavens! what would happen to my poor clothes!



It's over? Already? Gosh, the sun's hot. Didn't realise. Yes, yaar—we have to go. It's over. Do you ever feel sad, when exams are over? So—what did I tell you?



They are coming out. They are just children after all; their hands are dirty, their faces, too. And now they will want ice-cream and that bubble blower and some more chocolate, and their drawing boards will suddenly feel heavy. But they have been to a strange land, and done wonderful things. They have looked into the crystal ball and looked deep into the wishing well, and they have brushed with magic.



And now the barricades are down.



In search of lost parents!  
(Photographs by N. Anand Rao)

We are just tired parents with tired children. The paint brushes droop, the air is dusty, the cars honk. I wish they would not push me so from behind. But wait—that grey, that lovely, glowing grey—why haven't you given in your painting? What? But you have to—if you want to get a prize—!



Prize? Who wants a prize?

Poile

(See facing page for photo-feature)

## The Garden of Friendship

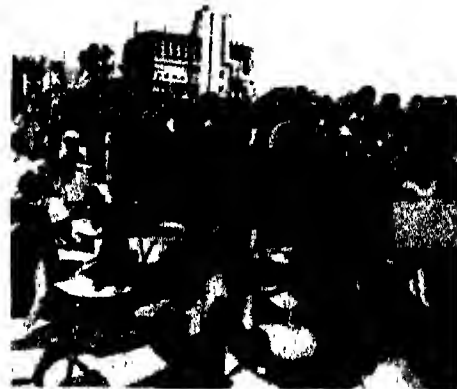
*Friendship is like a garden,  
It's beautiful and alive;  
It's a fragrant haven,  
Where true, friendly souls thrive.  
It flourishes when tended to  
And given time and care,  
But may languish if neglected —  
And grow stark and bare.  
It needs to be pruned,  
Nothing should be overgrown;  
Even a friendship has limits  
Which must be known.  
The soil needs to be tilled  
With understanding and affection;  
It needs to be watered,  
To wash away the defection.  
It needs the radiance of sunshine  
It mustn't be hidden in the shade;  
It must be open but not exposed,  
It must be your own but not closed.  
Your garden may have several flowers,  
Which blossom and wither away;  
But there are just a few special ones  
Which live and grow and stay.  
A true friend will be,  
Like the evergreen tree,*

*Standing loyal through every season,  
'You' being its only reason.  
You can nurture it with loving care  
And watch it grow before you;  
You can stand beneath it anyday  
And feel secured 'n' sheltered  
when you're blue.  
Its branches will reach out to you  
In their silent, comforting way;  
Its leaves will ripple with laughter  
When you're joyously gay.  
You can lean against its trunk,  
Or you can hug it close to you;  
Its roots will spread deep and wide, —  
Anchored it'll stand upright with pride.  
This tree's then there for a lifetime,  
Be there rain or shine.  
It is the essence of your garden,  
Be it not-so-bright or fragrant;  
It's symbolic of a true friend,  
Be it at your garden's end.  
So cultivate your garden,  
Care for it, respect it, and treasure it —  
And of the many seeds that you sow,  
At least one will mature and grow.*

Sonia Bhalotra



"On-the-Spot" shots. From left, clockwise:  
 An idea takes off a pencil point; A brush is  
 more effective; Amusement for many, anxiety  
 for others; "Can I pose for you?"; "I wish  
 I had brought more colours"; "Let me get the  
 outlines first"; Half-way through an effort;  
 "Well, this is almost over".





**CHILDREN'S BOOK  
TRUST AWARD**

Apurbo Bhattacharya (15)

**CHILDREN'S WORLD  
AWARD**

Mitu Banga (15)

**BEGUM ZAIDI MEMORIAL  
PRIZE**

Amitava Banerjee (12)

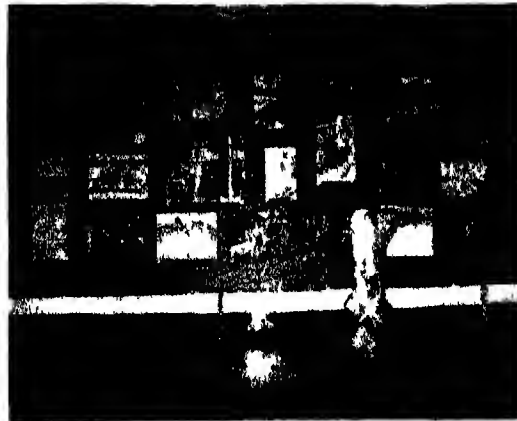






From left, clockwise: They come from all over the world; "Where's my painting?"; "Here, that's mine!"; Prizee first, paintings later; Adult admirers of children's art.

*(Photographs by our Staff Photographer)*

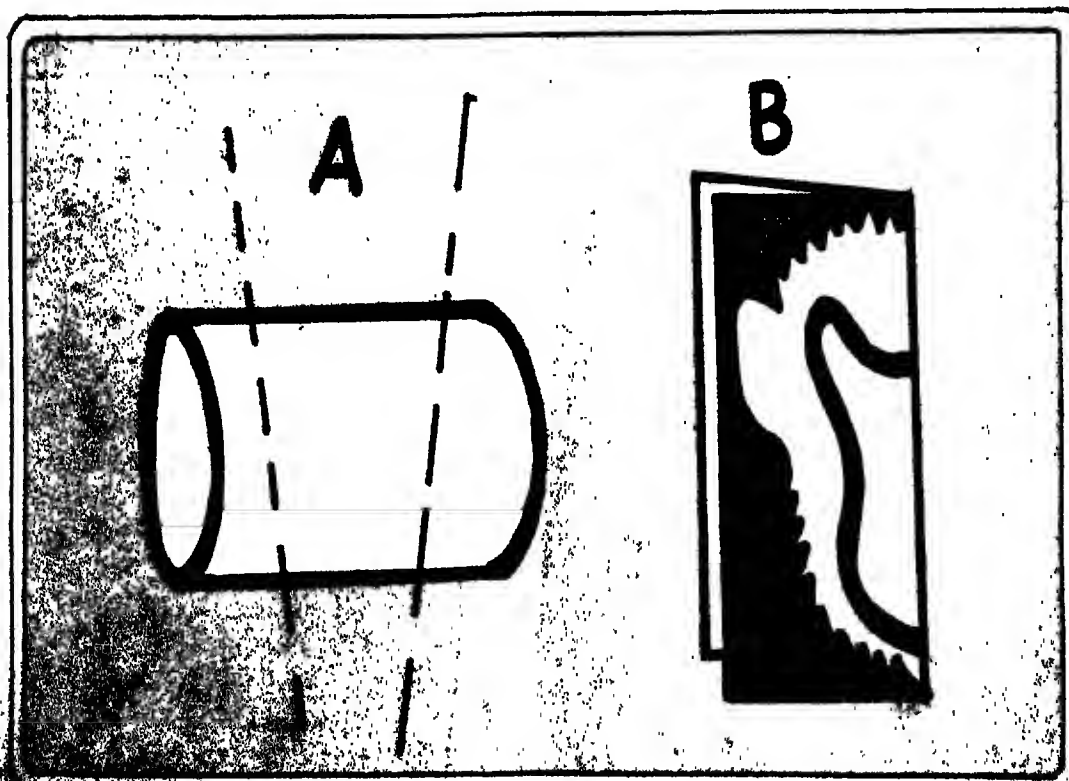






**R**OLL a postcard to make a cylinder. This forms the body of a monkey. Roll another postcard to make another cylinder. Cut away both ends, as indicated by the dotted line in diagram A. This forms the head. Fold another postcard and draw on it the upper part of the head, as shown in diagram B. Cut out, and fix it on the cylinder head. Then cut out arms and legs. Join all these parts to make the monkey. Cut out a circle for the eye. Paste half-circle and raise up the other half of the circle. Cut out a triangle for the nose. Paste half-triangle and raise up the other half to form the nose.

K.K. Jeswani





# BIG HITTERS: THE BREATH OF CRICKET

THE big hitting brotherhood is a fascinating one. Colourful characters, rich and rare, abound in this select species which, though inconsiderable in number, yet provides so much by way of popular entertainment. To the batsman, as also to the spectator, there are few moments as charged with excitement as when the striker attacks the ball with all that he is worth in valour and strength. A huge 'ballooner' climbs the sky and, as necks crane, disappears into the stratosphere, then plummets down in a gracefully curving arc beyond the confines of the ground. This is cricket for you—alive, vibrating, tactile.

This article concerns itself mainly with the 'original' rustic hitters, 'sloggers' if you like, though some of the names could hardly justify that billing. Take the case of Gilbert Laird Jessop. In a career spanning a score of years, he hit 26,698 runs at the incredible rate of 80-an-hour, an estimate arrived at by computing the details of his three-figure innings. In 53 century knocks, he made 7,441 runs in 5,378 minutes—a rate of just under 83 an hour! Yet Jessop was a complete batsman in his own right, a close watcher of the ball, a tolerably 'correct' player with a wide and versatile array of strokes at his command.

For the Gentlemen vs. the Players at Hastings in 1907, he smacked 191 out of 234 in 90 minutes. Reaching his 50 in 24 minutes, he went on to get his 100 in 42 minutes and his 150 in 63 minutes. A break-up of his strokes shows that he hit 5 sixes, 30 fours, 2 threes, 10 twos and 15 singles during a chanceless display. His immortal 104 out of 139 in 75 minutes with a five and 17 fours at the Oval in the 1902 Test Match against Australia gave England a famous one-wicket victory against tremendous odds; his furious 93 in 70 minutes off just 63 balls tamed the hitherto rampant progress of the South African 'googlers' in 1907; while his first and last meeting with West Indians realised 157 runs in 60 minutes with 29 fours. This was the Jessop magic which enslaved millions—magic which, once seen, was never forgotten.

Jessop was only 5 feet 7 inches in height, while blond-bearded George John Bonnor, a pure slogger in his 'wild' mood, was a veritable Goliath, standing some 6 feet 6 inches above ground. Weighing a good 17 stone, he was proportionately built, "a splendid specimen of height and symmetry". Bonnor, for all his remarkable hitting, bridled up immediately if referred to as a 'slogger' and would take recourse to playing pat-ball, which he characteristically called his "sweetly-pretty game". He was not playing this "sweetly-pretty game" when he made his tempestuous 124 out of 156 with a six and 16 boundaries in a Smokers vs. Non-Smokers Chanty match arranged by the English and Australian XIs in 1884. Bonnor appearing for the Non-Smokers, came in to bat sucking at a large cherroot and proceeded to belabour the bowlers mercilessly, Spofforth included—the last straw coming when he hit 'the Demon' right out of the ground to reach his hundred.

For one innings at least, E.B. Alletson of Nottinghamshire was beyond doubt the most terrific hitter ever. Against Sussex at Hove in 1911, he came in fifty minutes before lunch to score 47. After the repast, fortified by his partner George Gunn's advice to "give the beggars a bit of stick", he broke all restraint and launched a tremendous onslaught, the like of which has never been seen either before or since. With a string of the most explosive strokes imaginable, Alletson lapped up 142 runs in the next 40 minutes, making a grand total of 189 out of 227 in 90 minutes with 8 huge sixes, all out of the ground. One hit smashed a window in the pavilion; another had so much 'meat' behind it that it had to be prised out of soft wood in the new stand. Yet another went straight into the bar and frightened the thirsty souls there, splintering whisky bottles and glasses all over the place, while an even more remarkable one was a mishit that went over deep gully's head to land into the pavilion! It is on record that Killick, off whom Alletson took 5 sixes, "was



England's big-hitting captain Percy Chapman

less worried about his analysis than what might happen if Alletson lowered his sights and hit one straight back at him!" At one stage, for half-an-hour, he was scoring at the rate of—believe it or not—278 runs an hour!

The world record for most sixes in a season (72 in 1935) stands to the credit of Arthur Wellard, a 6 feet 2 inches giant who used a bludgeon like bat weighing some three pounds. In twenty years of playing first class cricket, he hit more than 500 sixes, another world record and one which may never be surpassed. Twice he wielded his bat to good advantage while hitting 5 sixes off consecutive balls, once off T.R. Armstrong and then off Frank Woolley's left-arm spinners. With Wellard in full blast, six hitting seemed to be the easiest thing in the world.

We now come to one who typified the ultimate in a slogger and fitted from top to toe the billing of the proverbial Village Blacksmith, an indispensable character in any cricket story. 'Big Jim' (C.I.J.) Smith had, indeed, only one stroke, and that served for any and every ball: he just planted his foot down the wicket, brought back his bat from as high a back-lift as possible, and let it swing straight through with all the force he could muster, finishing with a full follow-through. The stunning power he succeeded in imparting to his blows can be imagined when we understand that 'Big Jim' stood 6 feet 4 inches and weighed some 18 stone. The ball, when it connected even tolerably well, was a certain six, but even his snicks travelled colossal distances and scaled awesome heights. Once he hit a six to fine-leg off the handle of his bat; with his left arm alone, on another occasion, he "propelled the ball over the boundary behind extra-cover's head"; then he "swept away" a ball from Percy Fender, left-handed, which sailed out of Lord's to land on the busy St. John's Wood Road. In 1938 against Gloucestershire, he reached his 50 in the world record time of 11 minutes, eventually being dismissed for 66 out of 69 in 18 minutes with 2 fours and as many as 8 sixes.

Space does not permit the mention of some more who have hit their way into history, but who can ever forget Albert Trott, who once scythed a ball over the Lord's pavilion, and then spent the rest of his active life trying to repeat the feat (unsuccessfully) with the aid of a 3 pound bat? Or the combined assault and battery of left-handers Percy Chapman and Frank Woolley against Yorkshire (and the great Wilfred Rhodes) in 1924 when they belted 50 runs in 7 minutes of incredible hitting; or Percy Fender's world record century in 35 minutes with five sixes and 17 fours; or G.F. Earl, who, during practice, regularly struck the ball to distances of 75 yards and over with one hand! The legerdemain of Learie Constantine, the naked



'Big Jim' Smith lays on the willow

power behind Milburn's buffets, the almost languid ease with which Keith Miller despatched the ball over the top in years gone by, and which Lloyd of the present day batsmen succeeds in doing, perhaps with even more contempt for the bowling—these are the very breath of cricket.

Great men, great moments, moments to cherish forever. Their kaleidoscopic personalities have given us vignettes which readers of cricket literature will peruse with increasing wonder and delight, and which will forever dominate any talk in the councils of the game.

**Mahiyar D. Morawalla**

# "Give a man a horse"

THE world of horses is a world which leads to hours of sheer joy and the pleasure of being alive. It is a world providing free scope for the sense of adventure. Horses have always played a special part in men's lives, both as mounts and utility animals. Today, man's physical need for horses might have diminished to some extent, but his admiration for this beautiful and powerful animal has not. This series is a tribute to the nobility and courage of the horse. Almost every aspect of horses will be exhaustively covered — supplemented with photographs and sketches.

The horse has carried great kings and emperors, like Asoka and Napoleon into battles, pulled stage-coaches and gun-carriages, and even delivered mail

and messages, which perhaps changed the course of history.

The horse has always been man's companion, servant, and friend. Under man's guidance and teaching, the horse has impressed us all with its fantastic speed on the racetrack. Also with its ability to jump difficult obstacles, its graceful rhythm, and performance in the 'dressage' arena. The horse has amazing intelligence and communication with its rider during mounted sports and gymnastic events.

The interest in the horse has escalated by leaps and bounds during the past few years. Gone are the days when horses were only for royalty. Thanks to many reputed equestrian organisations, more people can enjoy the pleasures of

*The author with her favourite horse*



*(Turn to page 43)*

# "Minasan Komban Wa!"

**M**y name is Uma Sankar. I am a student of Class XII in Rannaram Ruia College, Bombay.

Last year, around the same time, my exams had just ended and I was lazing about, with time hanging heavily on my hands. On being advised to use my holidays fruitfully, I decided to learn a foreign language. I didn't want to study French or German, which are spoken by almost everyone, but something which is not so common. Moreover, I was already learning French at college. Secondly, being interested in painting, the Japanese script more than attracted me. It seemed so artistic! So I decided to go in for Japanese.

I joined the Elementary Course of the Japanese language at the Indo-Japanese Association. The course comprises 30 classes. The classes are taken by Mr. Pandhye, who is a teacher of Japanese and an interpreter. We were taught not only to speak the language, but also the first two scripts—Hiragana and Katakana. Each of these scripts contains 46 letters. One of the first things I learnt was to write my name in Japanese.

All this was one year ago. My holidays ended and college started. Japanese and Hiragana flew from my mind to make way for Physics and Chemistry.

Early this year, I got a phone call from the Indo-Japanese Association asking me if I would like to participate in a speech contest. Scarcely giving it any thought, I mumbled, "Yes." It was only after I had put down the receiver



that its full import struck me. Imagine speaking for five whole minutes on the stage and in front of God-knows-who and that, too, in Japanese!

The topic was, 'The Image of Japan in a Foreigner's Mind'. I sat down to write. It was tough going at first, but with help from my teacher, Mr. Pandhye, I managed to complete writing it and then began the mountainous task of learning it.

Came 26th February, 1983. The day dawned bright and clear. The competition was to commence at 3 o'clock. It was held at the B.E.S.T. Conference Hall. My mother and sister accompanied me there. The hall seemed packed. My heart skipped two beats. There were three judges, all of whom were Japanese. The Chief Guest was the Consul-General of Japan.

The contest began. I waited with

sweating palms. One hour, two hours. Lord! When would I ever be called? At long last, I was called — right at the end. I shivered a little as I climbed onto the stage and began: “Minasan, Komban wa” (Good evening, everybody).

Five minutes passed and I could now bravely look the world in the eye and say, “Goseicho arigato gozaimasu” (Thank you for listening).

We were asked to go out while the judges made their decision. About half-an-hour later, we all reassembled in the hall. One of the judges came up to the stage and, after discussing the merits and demerits of our speeches, began announcing the winners’ names. The winners were asked to take their prizes from the Consul-General. He began with the consolation prizes. My knees

turned to jelly. Imagine, then, my surprise when the judge called out, “Uma Sankar, First Prize.”

I don’t know how I managed to get up, but there I was receiving the beautiful silver R.G. Saraiya Trophy from the Consul-General. I said, “Arigato gozaimasu” and turned to go, when he thrust another huge packet into my hands. It was a cassette recorder-cum-transistor! Scarcely able to see my way, I got down from the stage.

This, then, is the story. This summer, I plan to finish the Semi-advanced and Advanced courses and learn the KANJI (third) script, which contains 3,000 characters. Stunned!?!?

Watakushi wa Nihongo ga takusan suki desu. (I like the Japanese language very much.)

Sayonara!

*(Continued from page 41)*

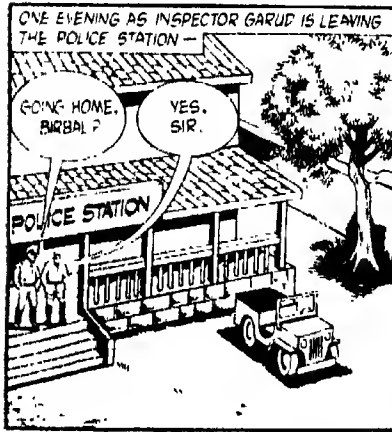
riding today, though in India, it is mainly confined to the army.

Recently at the Ninth Asian Games, India’s glorious soldiers, Raghunbir Singh and Rupindar Singh Brar, won gold medals for individual events and tent-pegging respectively. We should now take the cue and develop ourselves to take part in international competitions, like the Olympics. India, in her glorious past, has always had magnificent horsemen, and renowned Polo players, like the late Hanut Singh of Jaipur — India’s pink city. Perhaps the Indian army could take up the responsibility of developing this sport — by forming riding and polo clubs, of which both Service officers and civilians can become members.

Winston Churchill in “My Early Life” wrote: “No hour of life is lost, that is spent in the saddle.” You will be constantly reminded of this — more so, as riding is an individual sport. The beginner often tries to discover what it is that makes the horse go in so relaxed a manner for the instructor, but not for him! The beginner has to be totally confident of himself and have unlimited patience. Besides the determination to be perfect — to learn gradually — but well.

We’ll meet again next month, when I’ll explain at length about a riding school. Also the very first lessons for the eager, but perhaps slightly nervous beginner.

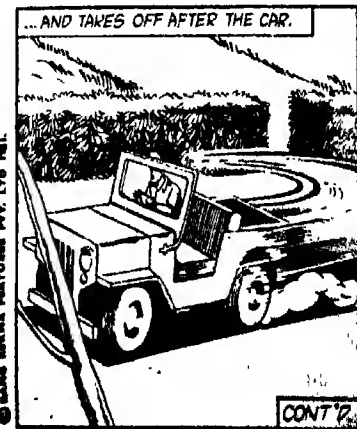
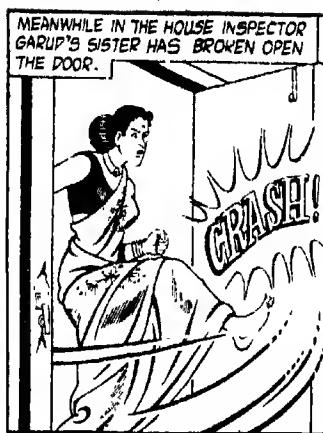
Sumitra Senapathy











# India's Tests in the Carribeans

**S**OON after the 3-0 drubbing they received in Pakistan (see *Children's World*, March 1983), the Indian Test cricketers proceeded to the Caribbean Islands, led by the young all rounder, Kapil Dev. The five-Test series, which started in the second week of February, will last till the first week of May. The Windies are already leading 1-0 at the end of three Tests. The new entrants to the Indian team are Gursharan Singh (Delhi) and Kiran More (Baroda). Anshuman Gaekwad, Venkataraghavan, and Ashok Malhotra were recalled to strengthen the side, in place of Viswanath, T. Sekhar, Sandeep Patil, Dilip Doshi, and Srikanth, who were dropped.

Out of the first two Tests, at Kingston (Jamaica) and Port-of-Spain, India could manage to draw the second Test, with brilliant centuries coming from the blade of Mohinder Amarnath and Kapil Dev in the second innings. It was in the second innings of the second Test that the Indians could make their highest score—469 runs for the loss of seven wickets—against the West Indians.

In the first Test at Kingston, India made only 251 runs in the first innings and 174 runs in the second. Except Yashpal Sharma, Balwinder Singh Sandhu, and Mohinder Amarnath, nobody could defy the West Indian pace attack. The Windies keeper, Jeff Dujon, took five catches and pace bowler Andy Roberts claimed four wickets for 61 runs in the first innings.

Ravi Shastri and Kapil Dev restricted the Windies first innings to 254 runs

giving them a slender lead of just three runs and claiming four wickets apiece. The top scorer on the Windies side was Greenidge, who made 70 runs and was caught by Venkataraghavan at second slip off Ravi Shastri.

India started their second innings in torment and could muster only 174 runs. For a win, the Windies required 172 runs with half-an-hour to go before the commencement of the stipulated 20 overs.

The Windies were given a rousing start by Desmond Haynes, who hit a six and 4 fours off 21 deliveries. These were to set a target of six runs per over. Vivian Richards enabled the Windies to reach their goal by clouting 4 sixes and 5 fours off only 35 deliveries to score 61 runs before he was caught by Kapil Dev at midwicket on the bowling of Mohinder Amarnath. Dujon formalised the result amid a scene of frenzy, with his six—the eighth in the innings for the Windies—in the final over, to put them one up in the series with a four wicket pulsating victory.

In the second Test at Port-of-Spain also, Gavaskar could not regain his form. However, it was in the second Test that Kapil Dev got his 200th Test wicket in 50 Tests, his victim being Andy Roberts.

Mohinder Amarnath (117) and Kapil Dev (100 n.o.) steered India to draw the second Test by making centuries in the second innings. It was a sporting Richards, deputising for his captain, who allowed Kapil to complete his century, by asking his team mates to con-

tinue with the bowling.

At the start of the Windies first innings, the Indian pace bowler, Sandhu, claimed two wickets and Kapil one, making the Windies three down for one run. But Lloyd (143) and Gomes (123) defied the Indian attack. Maninder got his first wicket of the tour when he wrapped up the Windies innings by claiming Michael Holding's wicket as he was caught by Vengsarkar.

Prior to the third Test, the Indians scored their first ever record win over the West Indies in a one-day international at Berbice, Guyana, on March 29. India, who had lost the first encounter in the threesome series by 52 runs, put up a record score of 282 for five wickets and won the match by 27 runs, the Windies score being 255 for 9 wickets. This win came as a birthday gift to their tour manager, Hammant Singh.

Their score was a record, in that no other country has put up a bigger total against the West Indies in a one-day tie. They improved by six runs on the previous best by Australia in the final of the World Cup Competition in 1975. But India's achievement was a shade better because the Lord's tie was played over 60 overs, while India accumulated their score only in 47 overs in the prescribed time of 3 hours 20 minutes.

It was no accident that India scored a historic win on the day Sunil Gavaskar, making the most of a hard, true pitch, made his first big score of the tour—an unblemished 90—before he was run out. Gavaskar was only the launching pad for a tempestuous 72 by skipper ▶ Kapil Dev, the runs coming in 38 balls, with 7 fours and 3 sixes. Blasting the Windies bowlers, Kapil got out when



*Mohinder Amarnath*

he went back to thrash a straight ball from Andy Roberts through the covers, missed it, and was bowled.

There were some belligerent strokes from Ravi Shastri (30), Mohinder Amarnath (30), Yashpal Sharma (23), as well as Dilip Vengsarkar (18 n.o), before time ran out with Ashok Malhotra remaining not out on one.

West Indies, who had sent in India,

certainly felt the pressure of having to score just less than six runs per over. Greenidge and Haynes opened the innings for West Indies and could score 16 and 2 respectively before getting out to Kapil Dev and Balwinder Singh Sandhu. Taking a return catch from Greenidge, Kapil injured his finger and was out of the field with Kirmani deputising for him. The outcome was that Richards made a quick 50 runs from 33 balls, with 10 fours, seven of them off Madan Lal. He should have been out had Gavaskar caught him at square leg at 57, with the total at 89 for three.

To India's good fortune, Richards did not last long, as he drew back from his leg stump for an extravagant stroke off Madan Lal and was bowled for 64, made off 51 balls. Prior to dismissing Richards, Madan Lal dismissed Lloyd (8) when he was caught by Mohinder Amarnath at long on while attempting a gigantic stroke.

West Indies were 98 for four in the 17th over, but India could not count themselves as victors, for Bacchus played quite superbly for 20 overs to score 52 runs. With him at the wicket, the Windies were in touch with the scoring rate. Ravi Shastri claiming Bacchus at 181, with six wickets down, India looked the more likely winners. Marshall (5), Roberts (12), and Holding (2) got out at meagre scores, and only Dujon, who had the measure of the Indian bowling, scored an unbeaten 53.

With high hopes of the historic win, India went into the third Test at the Bourda ground, Georgetown. But rain marred the match which inevitably ended in a draw. Rain washed out play on the second and fourth day, as well as the pre-lunch session on the third day.

Winning the toss and electing to bat, the West Indies scored 470 runs, with Vivian Richards (109) scoring his 14th Test century in his 50th Test match. This was also his fifth century against India. Skipper Lloyd went on to make 81 before he mistimed a late cut off Shastri and was caught by Kirmani. The openers Greenidge (70) and Haynes (46) gave the Windies a solid start, with the others contributing some 30 odd runs.

At one stage, it looked as if the Windies would reel under the pressure of Kapil Dev and Sandhu, who claimed two quick wickets and, with one run out, the score slumped from 251 for two to 259 for five. But Richards, Lloyd, and Dujon pulled the Windies out of peril.

The Indians went in to bat on a rain-sodden pitch, though their enthusiasm was not one bit dampened. They made 284 for the loss of three wickets, before the two sides called it a day on the fifth and final day of the match. The highlight was a magnificent 147 not out by Gavaskar in a record-breaking innings. His 27th century surpassed the 26 of the redoubtable Gary Sobers. Gavaskar is now the second highest century scorer, next to Australia's cricketing legend, Donald Bradman with his tally of 29 Test centuries.

This was also Gavaskar's 11th century against the West Indies. India's opener took 230 minutes to score the 147 runs, while his mates Gaekwad (8), Amarnath (13), and Vengsarkar (62) fell on the way. Yashpal Sharma remained not out at 35.

Gavaskar, who thus signalled his return to form, was declared the Man of the Match.

**Lakshmi Rao**

**T**HE Nehru Gold Cup Football crown once again eluded the Chinese at Cochin this year. China were runners-up in the inaugural tournament at Calcutta last year when Uruguay were champions. China repeated the feat this year also, losing 1-2 to Hungary in the final of the second Nehru Gold Cup Football Tournament held in March.

## NEHRU CUP FOR HUNGARY

The Tournament failed to rise to the level of an international fare despite the participation of the World Cup holders Italy, and Cameroon who were unlucky to bow out of the final rounds of the World Cup Tournament in Spain last year, though they did not lose a single match.

The tournament at Cochin got off to a start amidst doubts of it being held, as the commencement dates were twice postponed by the organisers. The tournament was further deprived of colour by the last minute withdrawal of Algeria who expressed their desire to participate only two days after the tournament began.

The tournament, however, brought forth the immense potential of China, a relatively unknown force in the world of soccer. Fielding a team of youngsters (the average age of the

players was below 20), China did exceedingly well. The Chinese went on improving with every match and kept Asia's flag flying high with their grit and determination.

China boasted of the most menacing front line of the tournament. They thrilled the crowd, with their splendid ball control, dribbling, and speed. The Chinese performance was more creditable, since they did not have a single international in their team.

The Chinese players also won the hearts of the spectators with their pleasing manners and discipline. China was the only team to finish their group matches without losing a single fixture. Their team rose to dizzy heights when they held the formidable Italians to a goalless draw in a thrilling encounter and proved their class with a reverberating victory over Cameroon.

Hungary, the eventual winners, on the other hand, fielded a professional side. Some of their players have an experience of not less than 90 international matches to their credit! After an unsatisfactory start in the group matches, when they lost 0-2 to China, Hungary settled down to force an easy passage into the final brushing aside the challenge from Italy, India, and Rumania.

The tournament was divided into two groups. Group 'A' comprised Iran, Cameroon, and Rumania, while Group 'B' included India, China, Italy, and Hungary.

With only three teams forming Group 'A', the matches were played on double-leg basis. Each team played two matches, unlike Group 'B', where the teams met each other only once.

Rumania and Cameroon qualified for the semi-finals from Group 'A', while Hungary and China completed the semi-

final line up from Group 'B'. Iran gave a disappointing display in their group matches. They lost 1-2 and drew 1-1 against Rumania and were goalless against Cameroon in both their encounters. Rumania and Cameroon won a match each against each other, Rumania winning 3-1 and Cameroon triumphing 2-0.

Group 'B' produced some thrilling matches with the presence of such formidable challengers as China, Italy, and Hungary. Hosts India gave a very shoddy display losing all their three fixtures. They lost 1-2 to China, 0-1 to Italy, and 1-2 to Hungary.

The bane of India's poor display was poor shooting, though the defence bore the brunt of the rival attack well. The Indians did well, losing by a solitary goal to Italy, but were outplayed by China and Hungary completely. India went into the tournament without any coaching after the Asian Games, and they paid heavily for this lapse.

Hungary fared well in the group matches with a 3-1 win over Italy, 2-1 win over India, though they lost 0-2 to China. Apart from their victory over India and Hungary, China played well to hold Italy to a goalless draw. The semi-finals were a mixed affair. While the China-Cameroon match was a 120 minute thriller, the Hungary-Rumania match turned out to be a one-sided affair.

In one of the most fiercely contested matches of the tournament, China beat Cameroon 2-1 through an extra time goal in the semi-final. After a barren first half, China forged ahead through Li Huayan only to see Cameroon's Kwebou score the equaliser a few minutes later. The match went into extra time and it was a gem of a goal scored by Zhao Daxin that enabled China take

a berth in the final. Daxin stunned his rivals with an angular stinger off a pass from the right wing.

In the other semi-final, Hungary toyed with Rumania 3-1 to storm into the final. Rumania, fielding a young side, were completely outshone by their opponents as they gave a mediocre performance. Hungary took the lead through Hegyi, while Dobany sealed the fate of Rumania with two goals to make it 3-0. Despite hard efforts, Rumania could only score a reducer in the dying minutes through Cojocar.

Hungary drew sweet revenge of their group matches debacle against China by beating them 2-1 for the Nehru Cup title in the final. It was their experience that brought Hungary the Nehru Cup crown as the Chinese, despite a wonderful game, lacked international experience.

The Chinese did not play their usual attacking game and paid the penalty for it, as it was a penalty goal that brought their downfall! With world class strikers in Hanzer and Dobany, the Hungarians gave a torrid time to the Chinese defence which stood like a rock.

Hungary played a systematic game to check the Chinese with a man-to-man defence. The match was a very closely fought affair, with the Chinese defenders foiling the marauding Hungarian forwards throughout the first half.

China looked like they were assuming their usual self in the second half, but it was Hungary which took the lead in the 60th minute. Collecting a stray pass at the top of the box, Nagy scored off a feeble shot. Eleven minutes later China, stepping up their attack, equa-

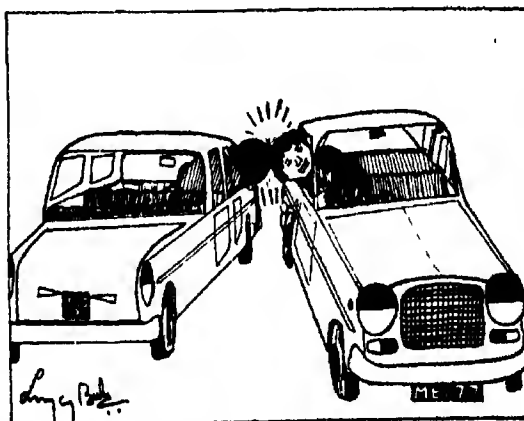
lised through Liu Haiguang, who headed the ball in brilliantly, off a flag kick. But the Chinese defence, which had earlier stood the onslaughts of the Hungarian forwards brilliantly, had themselves to blame for gifting a goal to their rivals. The ever-on-the-move Nagy was brought down in the box, which resulted in a penalty kick for Hungary and striker Dobany made no mistake with the kick, to make sure that Hungary win an international title after a long time, in front of a record crowd of over 75,000.

In 15 matches in the tournament, only 34 goals were scored, with Hungary topping the list with 10 goals. Individually, Dobany of Hungary scored the maximum of four goals, while Li Hua-juang (China) and Trioveann and Cajocar, both of Hungary, scored three goals each.

Vijay Lokapally

## JUST THAT

By Sanjay Balu



"Head on collision"



# The Wealth of Flowers

“MUMMY, the house looks so sad today,” said Rashma, the little girl from Kulu who, with her parents, was now living in Delhi.

“I know what you mean, dear; there are no flowers today,” her loving mother said with a laugh.

There usually was a floral arrangement in the hall and it made a cheery welcome to all as they entered the house. It was always Rashma's mother who saw to the flowers. Today, little Rashma proved how observant she was and her mother was pleased. It gave her a happy feeling that the child loved flowers as much as *she* did. Together, they missed the exuberance of the flowers of the Himalayan foothills. Way back in Kulu and Manali, there were flowers as far as the eye could see, flowers the whole year through. But in Delhi, it was expensive buying them from the local flower-wallah! A posy of roses was a luxury here, but it was such a different story in the Kulu valley.

“Rashma, I can spend only a little of my bazaar money on flowers,” continued her mother. “But it wouldn't be a bad idea to look out for flowers and foliage when you go to your friend Suman's farm next time.”

“Oh! Mummy, I wouldn't forget that,” said Rashma, her eagerness peeping through.

It was then that the little girl's mother said something that was to become a turning point in her life. “From today, for the whole year I'll let you arrange the flowers in our rooms. That'll be your special job,”

she said.

“What a lovely job” said Rashma, excitedly. “I'm brimming with ideas.”

Rashma learnt to choose the flower vase with care. Fortunately, her mother had a number of them to choose from – ceramics, blue pottery, copper bowls, jars of interesting shapes and colours, and a few flat square containers, also some shallow bowls. She also knew the use of pin-holders.

With flowers like the Dahlias and giant Chrysanthemums, the pin-holders often got upset and toppled. This was because they are top heavy, and even for an arrangement with a single bloom of any of these flowers, a broad heavy pin-holder had to be selected.

Rashma soon learnt how clever one had to be to select things from the available materials. It was March by the time she started on her special job. The fruit trees in the parks were all in bloom, so she gladly broke off small sprigs of pink cherry blossom or the red and white apple and apricot blossoms, and arranged them singly in bowls. They were all right for beginners. Of course, not long after, she began to come up with very lovely but inexpensive arrangements. By adding some stalks and leaves along with a few flowers, she made her arrangements look very pretty. She found that she could

bring a feeling of spring into the house with a few yellow narcissi or *nargis* and tiny wild flowers which were as lovely as they were inexpensive.

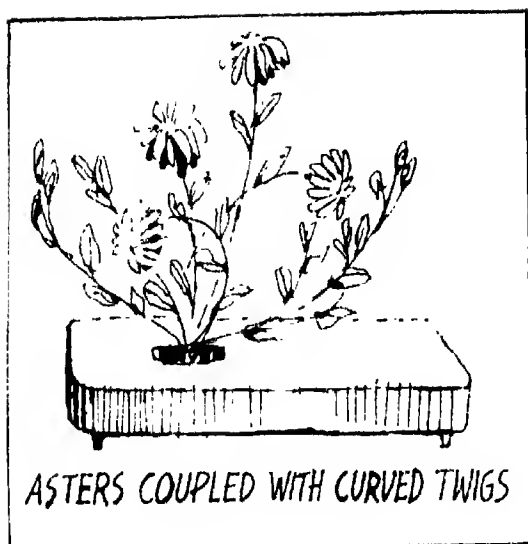
Rashma's mother often had interesting things to tell her about flowers. From her mother, Rashma learnt about the story of Narcissus in ancient mythology. He was once a beautiful youth, who never tired of looking at his reflection in water. He fell in love with his own reflection, and remained so long admiring his face in the water that he took root and turned into a flower! The narcissus came to be known after him. Rashma also read in her books that the Greeks had a god for the forests, another god for the mountains, and yet another for the gardens! Once Rashma was desperate for some blooms, as her garden yielded none. In Greek-fashion, she was tempted to pray to the god of the gardens. But what a thrill it was when the same evening, her Uncle Raj visited them with a bunch of nodding narcissi.

Come April, and big summer flowers like lillies with their leaves could be placed in a deep dish, brass or copper bowl, and they would enliven whatever corner it was placed in. When the phlox came, she picked great bunches, but was soon sorry that they became sad looking and floppy indoors. So

also the beautiful briar-roses. They were best left on the hedges. Rashma let them remain in the gardens and hedges sunning themselves.

Chrysanthemums lent themselves well to tiny little flowers that often were never noticed out in the wilderness. However, Rashma's favourite arrangement in the flower-season became a low arrangement of assorted Chrysanthemums from their small garden. She learnt how important *proportion* is in an expert arrangement. So, she used a small, flat, irregular-shaped bowl. Her mother showed her how the highest bloom or 'filler' in the arrangement had to be at least one-and-a-half times the width of the vase; and that no two flower stalks should be cut in the same length; and how a lovingly selected full bloom became the *piece-de-resistance* of the whole arrangement. The centre flower carefully placed, firmly yet jutting forward, covered the empty space between the low and high blooms in the finished arrangement. For her "Chrysanthemum Magic", as she called it, she always chose three tall stalks of long-petals-curling-in type of blooms in white and one full-bloom (with a short-stalk) to catch the eye. For the rest, she kept to rust and cream coloured small blooms that doubled as fillers.

Rashma's arrangement in a flat rectangular ceramic vase, of a few asters with *tulsi* twigs looked almost like Mummy's Ikebana style of arranging few flowers with interesting fillers. All flowers had a special way of facing (as when they are growing in the sun) and it was important for the trained eye to take in the curves of the stalks and place the flowers likewise. In summer, she had to be more careful of what she was going to put into the vases and where the vase with the finished effect was being placed. In summer, the flowers were few, and Rashma took pains to assemble them to their best effect. From the few garden-flowers in bloom, she was quick to learn how to create



unusual arrangements. One large Dahlia head, with only about an inch or two of stalk, with three leaves of the same plant all in a white bowl, made a pretty picture.

Rashma started to look about for leaves which were beautiful on their own. Leaves with berries could be turned into expert arrangements. She once found a profuse cluster of berries on a trail of *Mehndi* leaves. They were the perfect things to be placed in a long-stemmed green glass vase together with trailing ferns, for that sophisticated monochromatic touch of elegance. Placed on a corner table close to the wall, they looked well set. She soon found that they lasted her for days. A similar 'long lasting' arrangement she made with scarlet button roses (they are not really roses) and their leafy stalk. The finished effect was as if the plants were really growing in the vase.

One day, Rashma got the glass-cutter to knock off the neck of an eye-catching french-wine bottle, carefully retaining the palm-base encasing the bottle. She half filled the bottle with clay; the mouth was wide enough to push the mud easily through with this excellent receptacle for flowers and ferns. She came out with a splendid arrangement of ferns mingled with small and large flowers from the fields. So long as she was careful

to see that the water was well over the base of the stalks, but not upto the brim, she could push in the stalks at almost any angle she liked. She soon crowded the mouth of the bottle-vase with the stalks and at eye-level the flowers looked happy and graceful. This arrangement looked pretty from all sides and was set down on the low centre table in the drawing room.

The kind *mali*, working for their foreigner-neighbours, one weekend gave her a huge bunch of white ladsylace and mauve and pink shaded sweetpeas. Little Rashma of the hills would have stuck the whole bunch straight-up as a ramrod in the first available bowl; but now she knew better! Arranging flowers is not just jamming a bunch of mixed flowers into a vase.

She put all the sweetpeas and a few fillers of the lady's lace in a ginger coloured jar and placed it on the gleaming top of the refrigerator. The rest of the Lady's lace she trimmed and arranged low, and the coffee table got the pride of place for this centre-piece. For Christmas, her special effect arrangement of three large red Poinsettias with their greens was like a picture out of a Yuletide card. On Xmas day and the following days, her drawing room wore an additional festive look.

Now, her arrangements rated a second look and often was the topic of conversation among their friends. Little Rashma's passion for flowers soon took her on to bigger things. By the year end, the hobby class in Rashma's school awarded her a handsome prize for her entry "The Golden Harvest". Sagaciously, she had made the arrangement with stalks of pure golden wheat and the mustard flowers, all culled from her friend Suman's farm. The prize was naturally a beautiful illustrated book on flowers.

"I am so happy," said Rashma. "Oh, Mummy, thank you for the ...."

"Wealth of flowers," filled in her wise mother.

Mariam Mathew



# SEA CUCUMBER

**T**HE sea cucumber belongs to the Phylum Echinodermata and class Holothuroidea. Outwardly it differs entirely from the others in the Phylum, in its body form and nature. Thus, it is difficult to believe that it is a member of this group. Maybe because its shape and colour is like that of the cucumber that it has been given the popular name sea cucumber (Fig. 1).

Sea cucumbers are seen in the shallow seas, partly buried in sand or mud. They slowly crawl along the bottom or keep to the side of the wharf pile. They have a circular set of tentacles round the mouth. The tentacles are covered with a sticky mucoid substance to which living and non-living things get stuck. Whatever sticks to the tentacle is passed on to the mouth. They eat small microscopic plants, animals, and decaying organic matter. They quietly move their body and sweep through the water or substratum and gather their food. Moreover, like the earthworms, the sea cucumber also burrow and eat sand or mud. They digest any nutritive material in it and cast out the waste. They can burrow easily into the mud, because their sausage-shaped body and skeletal elements are suited to burrowing.

Other Echinoderms possess a strong, rigid exoskeleton.

Small fishes dwell inside the cucumbers during daytime. They get into the sea cucumbers through the anal passage (Fig. 2). At night, they go out in search of food. These fishes use the sea cucumber as shelter from predators. These unwanted guests are, however, in no way beneficial to the sea cucumber. At times they even harm the host.

The sea cucumbers have no strong skeleton, except for the small spicules in the skin. These spicules are of different shapes and sizes. They are not sensitive to light. But their sense organs are well developed. Their behaviour is interesting. When they are attacked by enemies, they immediately throw out everything inside — the intestine, respiratory organs, tentacles, muscles, and even the reproductive organs. The enemies get busy eating all these, while the cucumber cleverly leaves the scene. This curious process is known as evisceration (disembowelling); it is a defensive adaptation. And they have the power to regenerate the parts thus given up.

The sea cucumber's rate of locomotion is very slow. The maximum report-

ed speed is approximately one metre in 15 minutes. Moreover, they have the extraordinary capacity to remain motionless for long periods. There are records of sea cucumbers remaining motionless for about two years while in captivity.

Some variety grows only a few centimetres in length, while a few giant varieties grow upto one metre in length and over 20 cm in diameter. They also live upto ten years. Some of them are poisonous. These poisonous sea cucumbers are commonly seen in tropical and temperate seas.

In India, the sea cucumber is known as "Kadal attai" in Tamil. They are found in the Laccadive, Andaman, and Kerala coasts. But sea cucumber fishing has not been developed in these areas, though there is great scope for developing this as an industry.

Sea cucumbers are eaten raw by people in the Indo-Pacific areas. The best known dishes that come on the dining table, however, are made from "Beche-de-Mer".

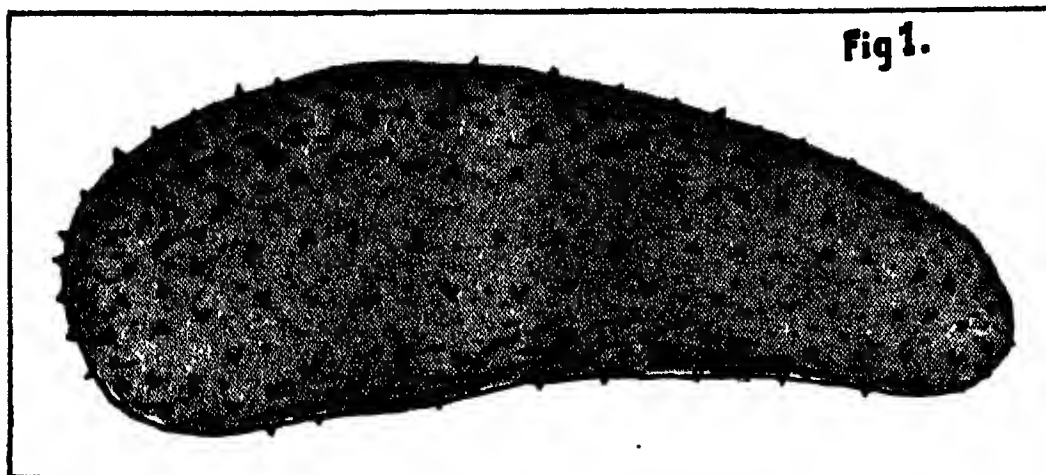
"Beche-de-Mer" is a very ancient preparation, very popular in Japan, Australia, the Mariana islands, New Guinea, New Caledonia, Samoa, Tahiti, Hawaii, Vietnam, Somalia, Madagascar, and Kenya. It flourished as an industry in

the south-east, along the Palk Bay and the Gulf of Mannar. More than 30,000 kg of "Beche-de-Mer" is produced in this area and exported to countries like Singapore and Hong Kong.

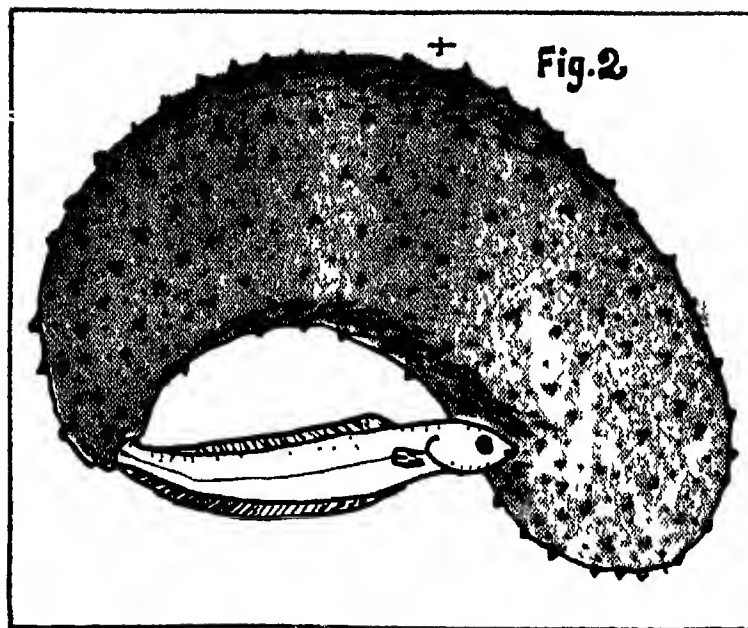
Two species of sea cucumbers are found. But the commercial product is obtained from *Holothuria seabra*. Fishing commences in February and finishes in October; the peak season is April-August. In low tide, people collect them by hand or use small scoop nets. In Philippines and Australia, they are collected with the help of trawlers.

The sea cucumbers are slightly heated first. They are then cut and the internal organs removed. They are washed and heated in a vessel over a strong fire. During heating, the body fluids are ejected from the body. After an hour's cooling, they are buried in the sand on the beach. To prevent drying, sea water is sprinkled over them. After 18 hours, they are taken out. Their skin is peeled and washed thoroughly. They are again heated for a few minutes in sea water and dried in the sun. After drying, they are smoked. When they turn into a dark red colour, the product is ready for use.

"Beche-de-Mer" is a very nutrient food. There is 35-80% protein in it.



**Fig 1.**



Moreover, this protein is easily digestible. It is cut into small pieces and used in making stew and soups. The soup prepared with "Beche-de-Mer" is considered effective for whooping cough,

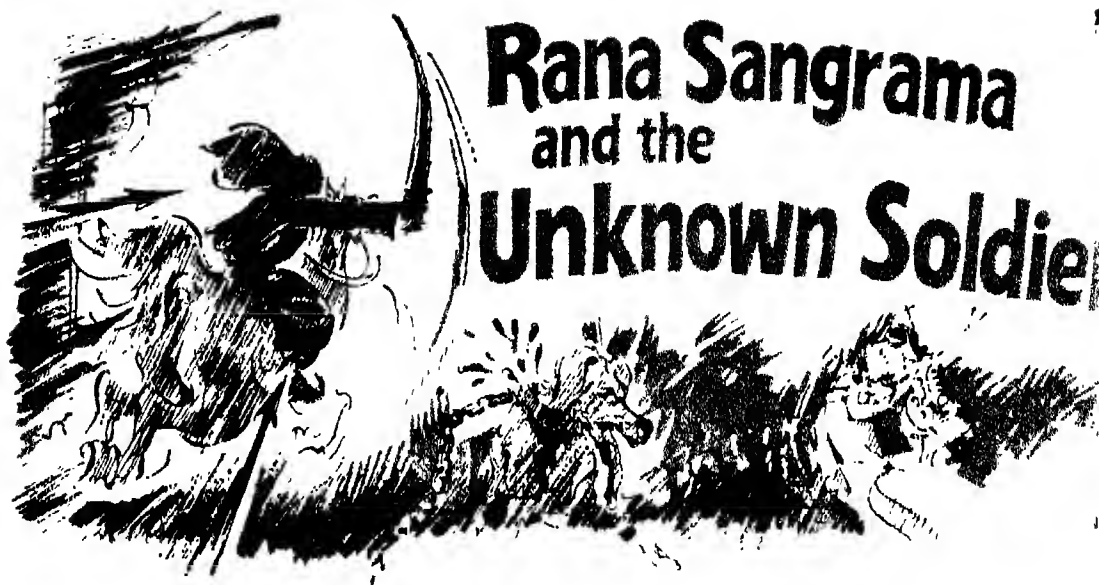
goitre, and some respiratory diseases. Many other preparations also can be made from "Beche-de-Mer".

V. Santhakumari

## JUST THAT By Sanjay Balu



*"What if we wash dirty linen in public?"*



## Rana Sangrama and the Unknown Soldier

**M**UBARIZ-UL-MULK had a striking appearance. Tall and well-built, with a beard that touched his girdle and a heavy moustache that curled upwards, his appearance struck awe in anyone who faced him. He arrived at Idar, where he was received by Nusrat-ul-Mulk, the retiring Governor. As soon as Nusrat-ul-Mulk heard of his arrival, he sent him tents, treasures, and elephants. Shortly afterwards, he went along with his army to escort him, and later entertained him at a banquet to celebrate the occasion.

Mubariz-ul-Mulk was in the service of Sultan Muzzafar Shah of Gujarat, at whose command he had come to Idar to take over as Governor. The fortification of Idar was most extraordinary. It was built on the summit of an isolated mountain. A deep ravine, formed by nature around the fortification, made a natural moat and it seemed impossible to take the fort by any of the regular approaches. Inside the fort, there was plenty of water and forage, though there was not enough space for any cultivation.

Any army besieging Idar would have

to confine its operations chiefly to blockading of the roads. Many of the roads from the fort were steep and inaccessible. Some of them were so rough and steep that a cavalry could only with difficulty find a way up. From whichever side it was approached, a pass had to be surmounted, so that the enemy force, though it might occupy all the accessible roads, was necessarily divided, with each party cut off from the other. The road leading to the gate was by far the most difficult.

Mubariz-ul-Mulk, being the protector of such a magnificent fortification, became a proud Governor. He started wasting his time in merry-making and ignored the administration of the fort and the city. He revelled in the company of the innumerable women in his harem.

Mubariz-ul-Mulk, being blinded by power and merry-making, one day got annoyed with one of his courtiers when he started praising the Rajput warrior, Rana Sangrama, his valour and generosity.

"I don't want to hear the praise of my enemy," said a furious Mubariz-ul-

Mulk. "Sangrama stands nowhere in comparison with our Sultan Muzzafar Shah. There should not be praise for anyone else except Sultan Muzzafar Shah of Gujarat in my court."

The courtier, in all humility and with folded hands, said, "My lord, I've seen the valiant warrior. His spear can break even stones; shields are blown to pieces with a blow from his sword. His chief glory is his honour; he will fight and die for the sake of his honour. It is well to remember that honour has cast him in

a mould so stern that he endures all ordeals unflinchingly. He will even wage a war for the sake of honour."

"Enough!" cried Mubariz-ul-Mulk. "I've no time to hear all this nonsense."

Noticing the fury of Mubariz-ul-Mulk, the courtier kept quiet.

But Mubariz-ul-Mulk was so annoyed that he asked for a dog to be brought before him, named it Sangrama, and tied it to one of the gates of the fort. He then asked the courtier to go to the Rana and challenge him to free the dog if he really possessed any valour and strength.

On hearing this fantastic decision, there was pin-drop silence in the court. Nobody dared to say a word before Mubariz-ul-Mulk. All of a sudden, a senior courtier, Zaman Khan Lodi, stood up and said, "My lord, please give a second thought to your decision. To take any decision in anger . . . . ."

Mubariz-ul-Mulk had great respect for Zaman Khan Lodi. Even so, he interrupted him. "Whatever decision I've taken, it is after serious thought. Rana Sangrama cannot dare invade Idar!"

Zaman Khan also fell silent.





The Rana soon heard of this insult. He assembled his army and marched to Idar, where Mubariz-ul-Mulk's officers were so enraged with the Governor for having, by his contemptible act, endangered their lives and the city that they dissuaded the Sultan from sending any assistance to him.

When he received the news of the Rajput invasion, Mubariz-ul-Mulk was terrified. He had only five thousand soldiers. He sought help from Sultan Muzzafar Shah.

Muzzafar Shah responded with a decree: "You shall not get any assistance. You have dared to insult a nobleman, and so you must bear the consequences of your act. Either face him or run away! This is not a war against us. Had the Rana not marched against you, I would have done so myself against such a cowardly act. Rana Sangrama has only done what any honourable man would do."

Mubariz-ul-Mulk was just stunned when he heard this. He got ready to flee to Ahmednagar. Finding him so perturbed, his wife, Raziya, who was Zaman Khan Lodi's sister, said, "Had you paid heed to my brother's advice,

there would have been no necessity to flee today."

Mubariz-ul-Mulk now felt ashamed. "When the Sultan himself has refused to help me, what can I do with my small infantry of five thousand?"

"Have you thought over your insult?" asked Raziya in a furious tone. "Sangrama will free the dog. And for your cowardice, the Sultan will disgrace you in such a manner that death will be a hundred times better! When you've challenged the enemy, you should face him boldly."

"Impossible!" replied Mubariz-ul-Mulk. "My army is disheartened. Nobody is prepared for war. What's the good of wasting my life?"

"Now, there's no time to think over this," answered Razia. "Defend the dog like a brave man. Victory or defeat is in the hands of Almighty God."

"I don't have so much strength," said Mubariz-ul-Mulk, after giving some thought to Raziya's words. "It's not possible for me to face Rana Sangrama on the battlefield."

For a while, Raziya was silent. She said, "Rana Sangrama will not be allowed to free the dog so easily."



Looking at her with astonishment, Mubariz-ul-Mulk asked, "What do you mean, Raziya?"

Raziya spoke excitedly. "I'm speaking as any honourable woman. You go and take shelter at the feet of Sultan Muzzafar Shah. I shall take the brave soldiers of Idar, and wage a war in order to save the honour of your word." Her face was aglow with anger, and Mubariz-ul-Mulk could only gaze at her.

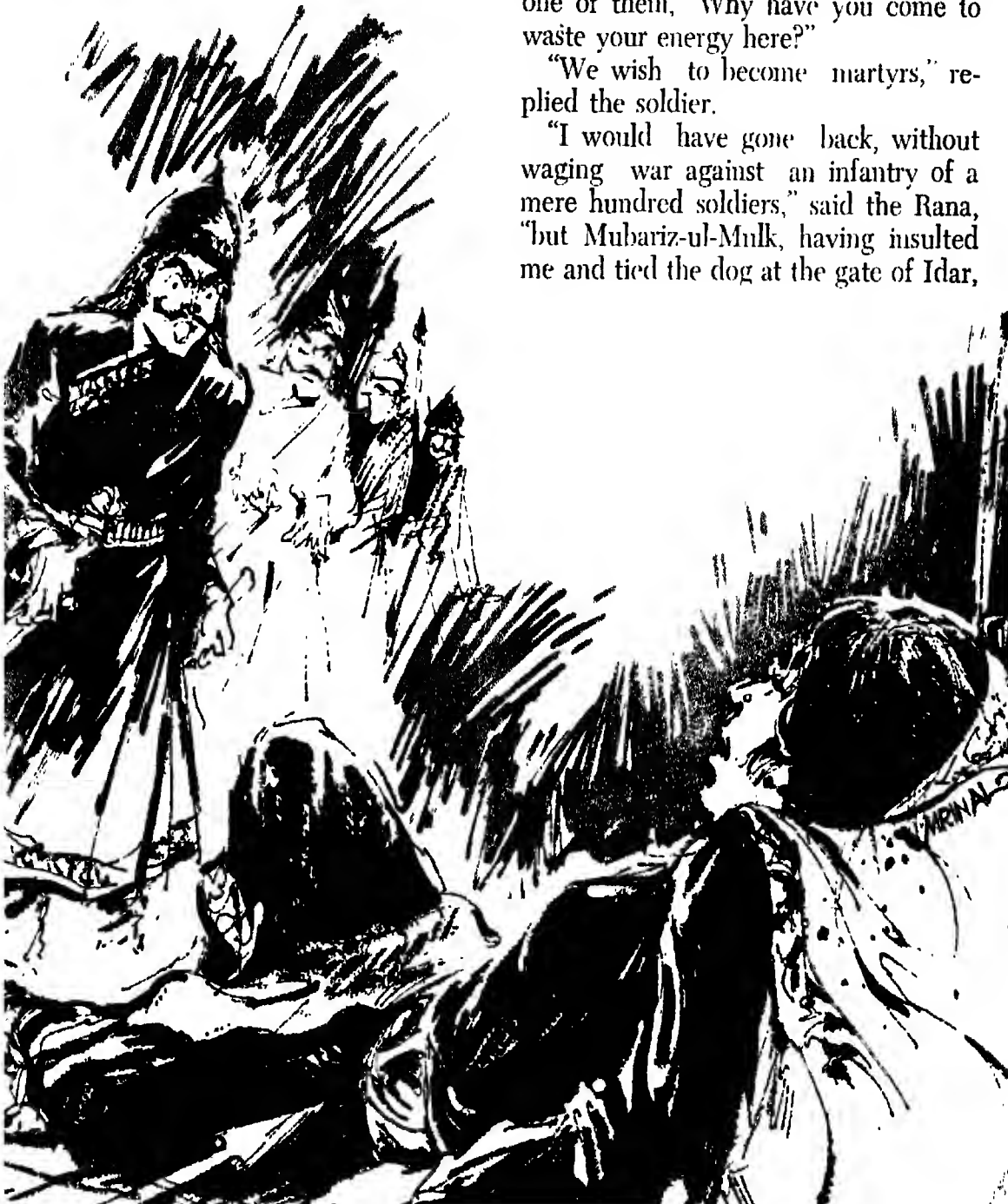
Meanwhile, forty thousand brave soldiers, led by Rana Sangrama, arrived at the gate of Idar. Mubariz-ul-Mulk and his timid followers managed to flee to Ahmednagar.

The next day, a mere handful of a hundred faithful soldiers under the leadership of Raziya, the Begum of Mubariz-ul-Mulk, set out to face Rana Sangrama.

Taken aback on seeing the small size of the enemy troop, the Rana asked one of them, "Why have you come to waste your energy here?"

"We wish to become martyrs," replied the soldier.

"I would have gone back, without waging war against an infantry of a mere hundred soldiers," said the Rana, "but Mubariz-ul-Mulk, having insulted me and tied the dog at the gate of Idar,



has compelled me to set it free."

The battle was soon in full swing. Razia's soldiers fighting bravely fell down one after the other. One of the injured soldiers from Raziya's side was then seen running to the gate of the fort.

"Zaman Khan! Do you want to disgrace the name of your dynasty?" he cried out.

"No! no!" replied Zaman Khan. "Though only five of us remain, I won't allow Rana Sangrama to fulfil his wish of setting the dog free!" But such a desperate valour was of no avail against the large Rajput force.

The Rajputs had by then entered the fort. Zaman Khan and the Rajput soldiers together reached the dog. He wanted to give a fatal blow to the dog with his spear. At that time, a Rajput soldier flung a dagger at Zaman Khan. The spear fell down from his hands. He then jumped down from his horse and rushed to kill the dog with his sword.

The Rajputs also jumped down from

their horses, so that they might save the dog from being killed by Zaman Khan. At that moment, a heavily clad soldier on horseback came galloping and trampled upon the dog. Then, leaping down, he killed it with his sword.

Countless swords and spears were pierced into the bodies of Zaman Khan and the unknown soldier. Every Rajput sword sprung out to force down the two soldiers.

The war was over, and Idar was now in the possession of Rana Sangrama. The Rana was very much moved when he saw that the unknown soldier was a woman — none else than the brave Raziya, who did not bow her head but preserved the honour of her race.

The Rana felt very sorry for her. Applauding her valour and perseverance, Rana Sangrama led his army back to Mewar.

'Everything is unstable in this world,' he mused. 'Land and wealth will disappear, but the virtues of a great name will live forever.'

Shamsuddin

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(Continued from page 17)

world. By the way, what mischief are you up to, right now? I can hear you sh-sh-sh-ing. Okay, I'll stop asking questions.

*Yours michievously  
Krishna Kumar, Dombivli*

*Dear Krish, Krisher, Krishest,  
Yes, here I am. Down on earth! There*

was a time when I thought I might have to go underground. I'm sure you'll know why. But right now I have my feet in the clouds and my head on the ground. Oops! I mean the other way round—like the earth goes round.

Mischief!? You mean mischief? Me's-chief!

*Yours superlatively <  
Perkest*



# HOUSE CROW



**N**OBODY in India can say that he has not seen a crow — the most familiar of Indian birds. Always shadowing man the house crow can be found almost everywhere in the country. It is known to survive even at 7,000 ft above sea level, both in the Nilgiris and the Himalayas.

The common House Crow (Hindi kaowa; Bengali kak), with no outward difference between the male and the female, is about 17 inches long and has a glossy black colour with a little streak of grey on the neck and breast. This wily sham quaker is rowdy and noisy when awake.

It usually builds its home in the forks of trees. The nest, which does not present too tidy a spectacle, is made with twigs, rags, dry roots and, occasionally, even with pieces of wire. The breeding season for the crow is approximately April-July, though it is not difficult to notice a stray nest as late as November-December. Normally the clutch consists of four to five eggs, which have a pretty shade of blue-green with light brown specks.

Crows have a natural tendency to roost in large numbers. By sunset they usually wing their way to a selected

patch of trees. Here the gregarious birds sleep, until dawn finds them again on an impatient hunt for food. Larger flocks break up into smaller flocks. They, in turn, separate into small groups, so much so some of them travel long distance from where they spend the night. Indeed, it might be that each small group of crows go daily to their own respective foraging region, for they all seem to come back on schedule.

Farmers look upon the crow with mixed feelings of happiness and hatred. They are happy when they see the birds devouring locusts and other pests which nibble at the crop, but hate the thieving crows which raid the orchards and damage the fruit. Crows eat anything. In fact, their omnivorous habit has earned them the name 'scavengers of the town'. Themselves immune to disease, they are reported to carry the germ of what is called 'Doyle's disease', deadly to poultry.

"The crow is a typical scavenger," wrote Otto Widmann, the well-known American ornithologist. "The choice of winter roost proves it. I have examined thousands of pellets (the indigestible parts of food eaten and

thrown up) which are lying under the roosting trees and on the sand where the crows gather. The crow eats anything and everything, but it prefers animal matter, either fresh or old. It devours a rotten apple as a change of diet and eats chicken without inquiring how long it has been dead or of what disease it died.

"When crows find a dead horse," Widmann continues, "they return to it every day until the bones are picked clean. When the body of a man was seen floating down the river on an ice field, it was surrounded and was being torn to pieces by crows. When such an item is found, it is accompanied for many miles by troops of hungry crows and a bald eagle also joins the revelers and gets the lion's share."

On sunny days, the birds think of courting. They gather on a sunny meadow, or other favourable places, and talk to each other in the softest crow language. One of them flies straight up into the air, soars for a moment, and floats gracefully down, to the cheers of the rest. Then it watches others imitate its act.

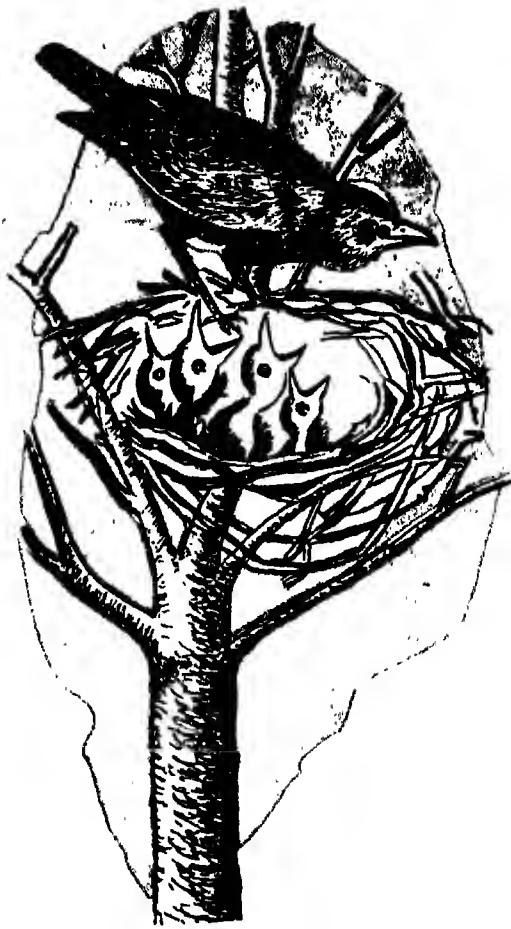
As early as January-February — the mating season — crows are often seen

in pairs, sitting quietly side by side in a shady tree, preening each other's head feathers now and then. Male birds often feed the female ones when they pair up. This feeding continues even when the young ones become fledgelings by August. Both birds share in the care of the young which hatch in about 21 days, the female perhaps taking the major share in incubation, with the male assisting occasionally. The nestlings are dull and ugly looking, with bluish eyes and deep pink mouths.

The crow is often thought to be a stupid bird, because the koel, like the cuckoo, lays its eggs in the crow's nest without the knowledge of the owner! This does not mean that the crow is a 'backward' bird. In fact, it is very bold and intelligent, and its ability to take off at the slightest sign of danger has often saved its life from the wrathful hands of man.

A measure of its intelligence can be made from the famous fable of Aesop, "The Thirsty Crow", which goes to show that observant people have thought the crow to be a very resourceful bird undaunted by ordinary difficulties.





Crows have a language of their own; that their calls have recognizable meanings (as indeed do those of all birds) has long been known. Most bird lovers and naturalists knew the difference between the various calls: the loud, clear assembly "caws", the rapid "ca-ca-ca-ca" of alarm, and the excited scolding when they mob an owl.

Without doubt, crows do have mental qualities of a high order. Experiments with captive crows show that they have considerable learning ability, they can count up to three or four, and learn to associate various noises and symbols with food. They also have some imitative skill and, with patience, captive birds can be taught to say a few words, though they are not as good at it as mynahs or parrots.

A legend leads us to believe that, like the elephant, the crow also dies in obscurity. It is argued that nobody has ever seen a crow die under normal circumstances.

Crows have found their way into the folklore of Japan. When the lord of the Satsuma clan with his men was marching on Pyongyang during the Korean campaign in the 16th century, birds now known as the Korean crow flew along with the procession muttering what sounded like 'kachi, kachi' which, in Japanese, means 'victory, victory'.

It was considered a good omen, and some of the birds were, therefore, brought home when the war was over. This species is now honoured in Kyushu as the official bird.

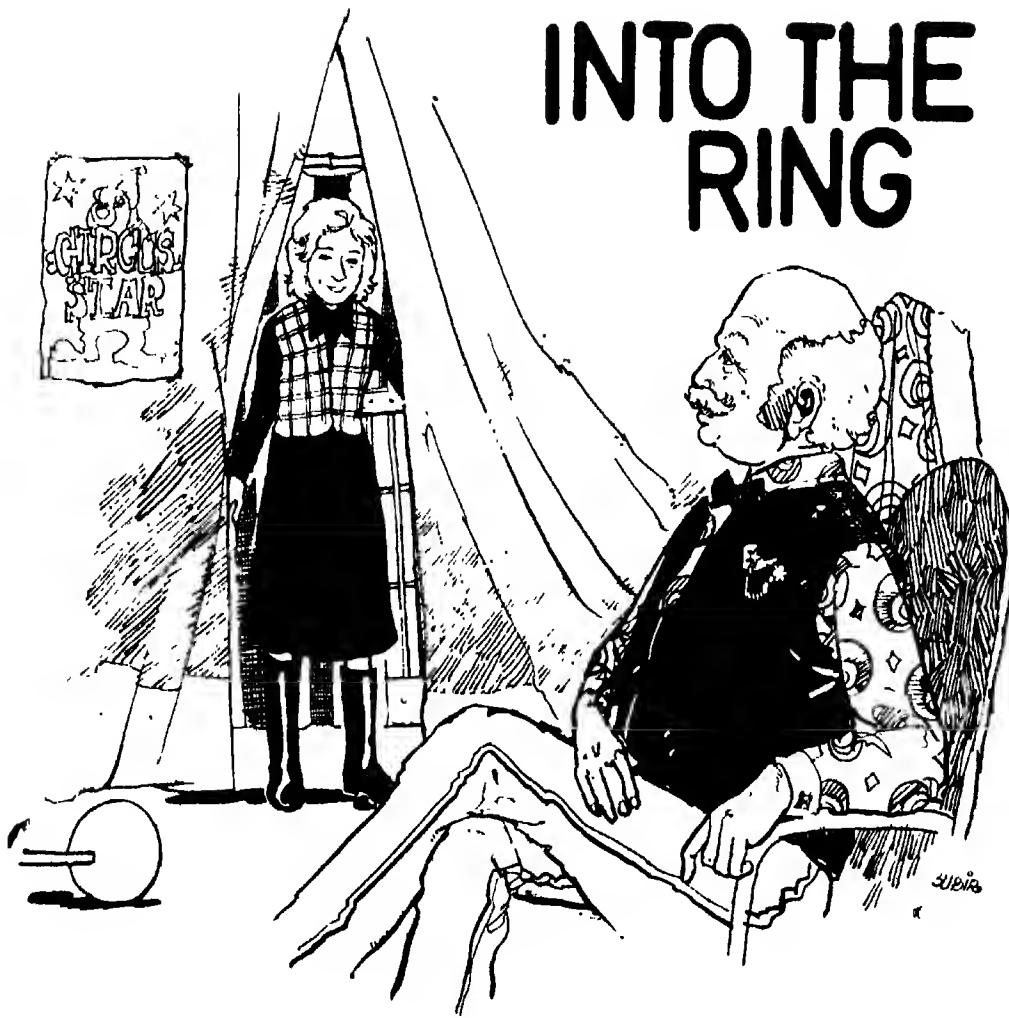
Many shrines in Japan have crows as their sacred messengers of the gods, and they are protected within the compounds of the shrines. It is said that these messengers can give indications of the future. If any unusual movement or activity is noticed among them, it is assumed that some extraordinary event is about to take place.

Although better known for pilfering, the crow has many admirable habits. Many lessons can be learnt from the domestic life of crows. They are strictly monogamous, demonstrating great love for their mates and their offspring.

The crow is also a tenacious bird. No matter how much they are persecuted by farmers, they always seem to be increasing in number. We can be sure that whatever happens to the world, the crows will always remain.

U.C. Chopra

# INTO THE RING



A WILD wind ruffled the tents of the circens camp as Alix Bridgewater approached it. She stood, hesitantly, at the gate. For a moment, she felt like turning back. It was something very queer that she had in mind. Something which had raised a babble of laughter from some of her friends.

When she had moved out of school after the valedictory address by the headmaster, wishing them well, telling them that they had the entire world before them, the discussion centred round their future. The students talked animatedly, some about going to universities for higher studies, some about signing on as apprentices in industrial or commercial houses, some

about pursuing a study of fine arts, some others about moving to the far corners of the world to learn as they travelled. But the strangest desire was expressed by Alix Bridgewater. The girls, most of whom were sixteen, stared at her when she declared, "I want to join the circus. I want to train animals... wild animals."

Her best friends understood her desire. They knew how much she loved birds and animals. Often they had seen Alix sitting in the classroom, but straying away mentally, responding to the cries of the cuckoo or the bark of a dog or the braying of a donkey. Alix could imitate to perfection the sounds of most birds and animals. Often, when she

went on picnics, she would imitate the call of the cuckoo and make the cuckoos start a search for the new member of the tribe. She would bark like a dog and evoke a response from all the dogs in the vicinity. Alix loved animals and birds. So, her desire to become an animal trainer seemed perfectly natural.

Alix stopped at the gate, wondering whether it was wise to seek a job there. Her heart was pounding away. She was excited.

"What do you want, Miss?" the guard at the gate enquired.

"I would like to meet the manager," Alix replied.

"One minute. I'll find out if he's free."

Alix waited while the man moved away. She heard the roar of a tiger. It came from within. That raised her hopes. She could befriend the tiger. She could play with the lion. She would make them do the tricks she taught them. She knew she had it in her to train animals.

"Yes, the manager will see you."

"Thank you."

Alix moved briskly as she followed the guard.

"Come in, my fair lady," a firm loud voice floated out of one of the tents. She peeped through the slightly parted canvas and stepped in.

"Good morning, sir. I am Alix Bridgewater."

"Good morning, Alix. Tell me, what brings you here?"

"I've just finished school."

"Congratulations!"

"Thank you. Now I want to train for a profession. That's why I'm here today."

"Are you a gymnast? Can you turn and twist your legs and arms at all impossible angles? Or can you perform sleek tricks riding a horse, stand on it

or perform double somersaults? Tell me, tell me what you can do for the circus. If we've a vacancy, we'll take you."

"I want to be an animal trainer."

"Animal trainer, did you say? The big, ferocious lions will gobble you up in no time! No. Miss Bridgewater, wild animals are not for you."

"But I know that I'll be successful. I spent all my life at Hampshire. At home, we had lots of animals. . . goats, chickens, rabbits. . . ."

"But they are all tame. Not wild. No, Alix. Just because you love animals, I can't let you get close to lions and tigers and bears."

"Aha, that's what you think. Now, let me show you the tricks I have." Alix did not wait for the manager's nod. She roared, very much like the lion. From far away, the responding roars of lions could be heard. She trumpeted, making the elephants in the circus trumpet louder. She let out a bird note, and a bird wafted in singing a similar note.

"Enough, Alix. I know you can make all sorts of sounds. You can roar like the lion, bark like a dog, whistle like a bird. But that doesn't mean you are fit to be an animal trainer."

"Why don't you give me a chance?"

"It's risky, my dear."

"I know that. But I'm ready to face the risk. Come on, please give me a chance."

"You're very persistent. . . well, let me see whether you can get along with animals."

Alix beamed a happy smile. She shouted, "Thank you. I'm ready for any test."

She trailed behind the manager. She saw the big elephants, swinging their legs, rattling the chains on them, probing here and there with their long, curling trunks. She wanted to go and pat the elephants. But the manager was



hurrying away. So she followed him, faster.

At last, the manager stopped before a spacious cage. Inside there were two little tiger cubs. The manager opened the small door. The cubs cowered in a corner, glaring at Alix and the manager. They whimpered. Alix got in while the manager watched. She picked up the two cubs and came out, holding them



in her arms. She held on while they turned and twisted, eager to get out of her grasp. One of the cubs tried to claw her, but she arrested the blow in the nick of the moment. She gently ran her palm over the cubs. They became quiet.

She hugged them close. She put them down, and let them chase her. She ran around with them. She allowed them to stalk her. It was fun. For ten minutes

she played with the cubs. When she stopped playing with them, the cubs ran after her as if they had known her for ages. They refused to let her move away. They clung to her.

She lifted the cubs in her arms, held them close, and went up to the manager.

"What do you feel about my request to be an animal trainer?" Alix repeated.

"Let me warn you, it's a very risky proposition. The lions are wild. Some of them are ferocious. The tigers are dangerous. The bears are strong and moody. I don't know whether you can make them obey your orders. Further, there is hardly any animal trainer who, at some time or the other, doesn't get mauled by the beasts. It's dangerous. Think of the risks before you decide."

"I know the hazards. But that's where the challenge lies. Please take me in. You shall not find me wanting."

"I know. I've seen how quickly you befriended the cubs. I've heard you imitate the notes of birds and the calls of the animals. I agree that you love birds and animals. It's this love which may help you become a successful ring master. Well, dear. I can't refuse your request. In all my life, I've never seen a more determined girl. Further, you've the skill and confidence, too. So, if you are ready, I'll take you on as a trainee under our ring master. He'll train you first. Then you can train the animals to perform feats."

"Thank you, sir," she bowed to him, rubbed her cheeks against the fur of the cubs, showing her joy by swinging them merrily.

They seemed to enjoy being whirled around by Alix.

R.K. Murthi

*(Based on a true incident)*

# The Story of a Love Bird

I AM a young love bird. I lived with my mother, father, and brother. One day, my mother and father fell sick. So we, my brother and I, went to look for food. When we had gone some distance and were resting on a tree, someone caught us and put us in a cage. How we cried, my brother and I! We were taken to a market where people came to buy us. Some people liked us, some did not. Some time later, an old man came with two girls. When they saw us, they stopped. The girls liked me and my brother very much. They asked the price and bought us.

After reaching their home, we were given some rice to eat and some water to drink. Even though we were looked after nicely, we felt sad for losing our mother and father. We were named Rinku and Minku. I did not know whose name was Rinku and whose Minku, till I was left alone for a day. Till then my brother and I lived together in a cage. Sometimes we would play, and sometimes we would both feel very sad. Seeing this, our master would give us some rice. One of the girls also gave us some water to drink. Then we would eat and drink a little. Like this, a few days passed by.

One day for fun, my brother did not let me eat or drink for some time. I was very hungry. So, I got very angry with him and started pecking him with my beak. I pecked him so badly that he felt a sharp pain. We started fighting. My poor brother! I pecked him so much that he could not sit at all. Then our master came with one of the girls. He saw us

fighting and tried to stop us, but could not. Then they went away thinking we would stop fighting.

After some time, the girl came to see whether we had stopped fighting. She had a stick with her. Seeing it, I was afraid, but we did not stop fighting. She tried to coax us, then scolded us, but we continued to fight. The little girl thought for a while. Then she took us round the house. She took the cage upstairs, but we still fought. Then she opened the cage. I did not see it. My brother saw it and flew away. The girl then closed the cage.

After some time, I realized that my brother was missing. I called for him, but he did not answer. I called out loudly. Hearing this, the girl came. She said, "Minku, why are you crying?" That is how I came to know my name is Minku.

Let me tell you the rest of my story till today. That night, I could not sleep for a long time. Somehow I managed to go to sleep at last. Next day, early in the morning, I woke up. But I did not eat at all. The girl gave me rice and other nice things to eat, but I did not eat even a little bit. I only drank water.

The girl and her father felt very sorry for me. After some time, they opened the cage door. This time, I saw it and flew away. I did not want to be caught again. After flying for sometime, I came upon my brother. He was resting on a tree. We both are now looking for our mother and father.

S. Meera (10)

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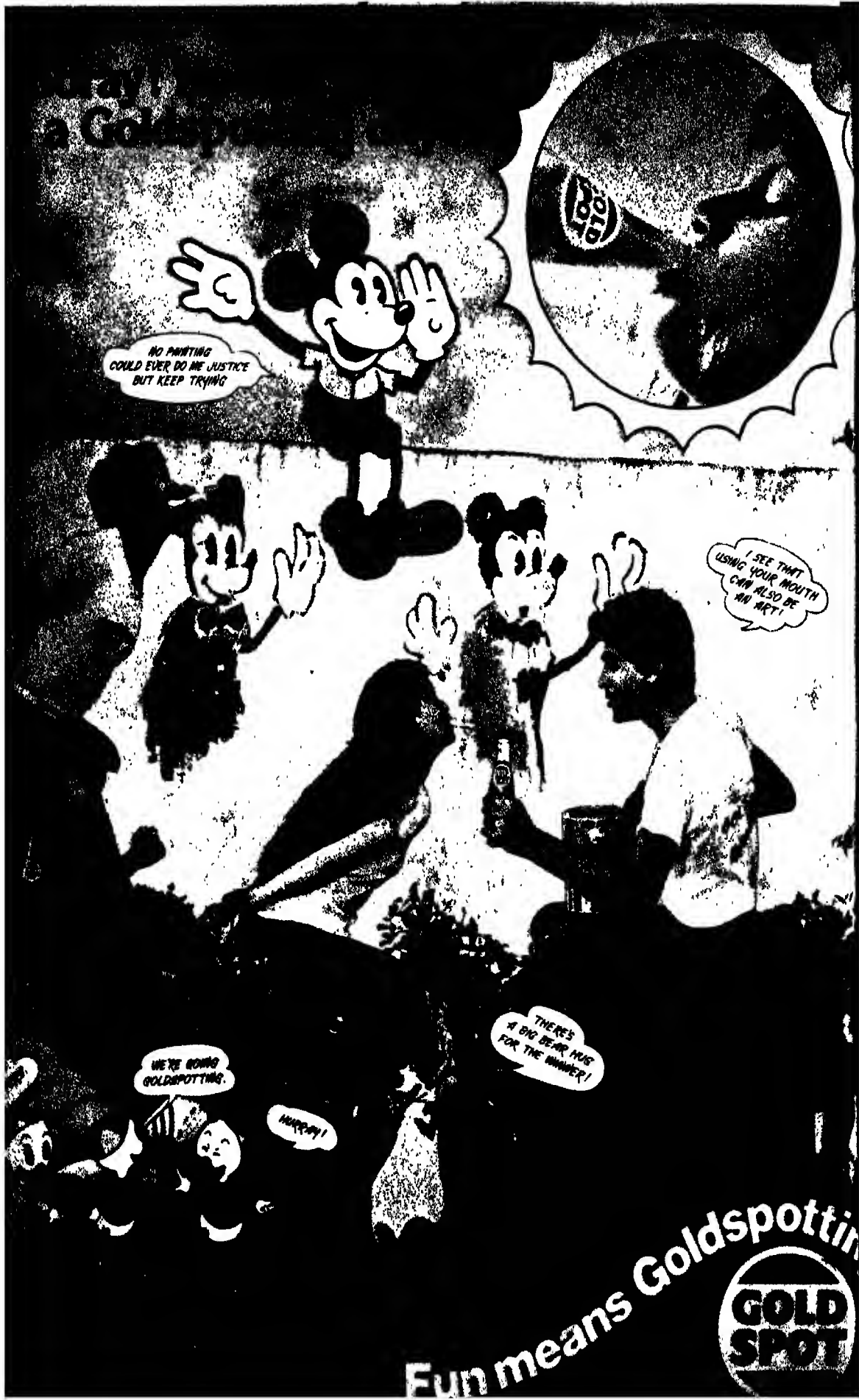
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# CHILDREN'S World

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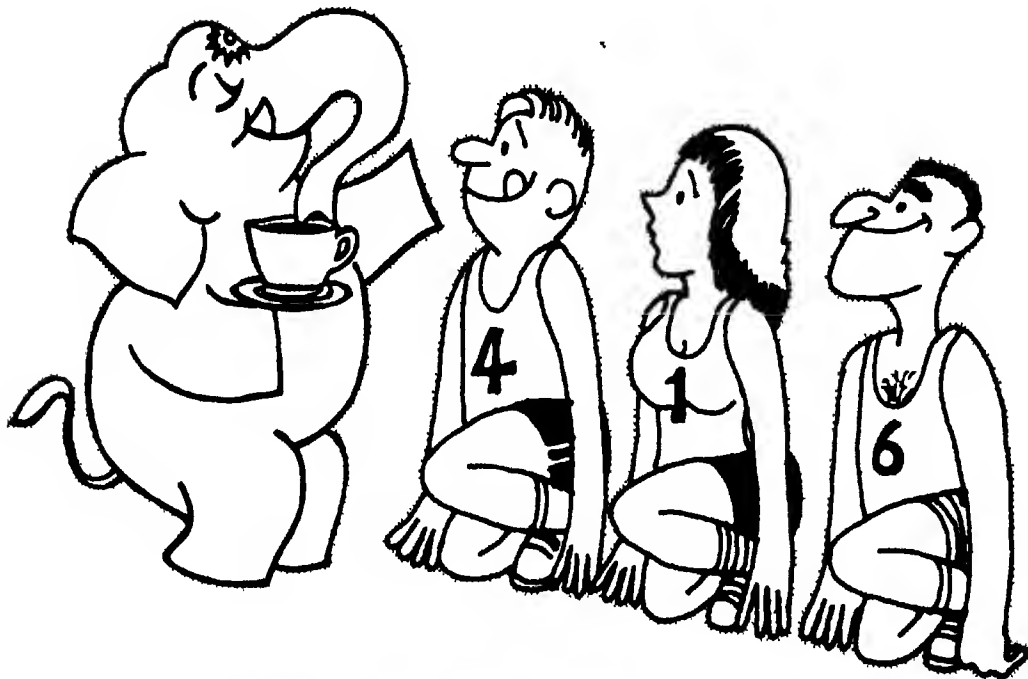
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Cover of the Month: Transparency by  
Raj Kumar Sinha

© Children's World, 1983



# Two-way Talk

Dear Editor,

Congratulations for having published this very unique and interesting magazine for a full 15 years. It is a real accomplishment of which, I am sure, you are rightly proud.

*Jong Hwan Suh, Director, Ministry of Culture and Information, Korea*

I heard about your magazine while I was in India on a holiday. My father brought some issues for reading. I found them very enjoyable.

*Deepti Ravindran, Australia*

My children used to enjoy "Kapish", especially where the clever monkey outwits Sigal and saves Motu. Stories with humour, like the one in which Little Mynah cheats all her friends, are also well-liked. They do not like folklore unless they are told colourfully. They would like to know more about Nature, the life around them in the form of insects, birds, and other creatures. The write-ups about children with outstanding achievements (like the girl who won a prize in a Japanese oratorical competition) help us, parents, to show them as examples and encourage them. It is a tremendous task you are doing — carrying the lantern for lighting the little lamps in an otherwise commercial world. As a mother and citizen, I should thank you whole-heartedly.

*Nirmala Chakravarthy, Madras*

After going through your articles, I must say that the magazine is a beacon light for children. I find the magazine superb. "The Tongue-cut-Sparrow" and "Inspector Garud" were wonderful. However, I miss "Kapish".

*Archana Mishra, Jamshedpur*

My Papa reads "Children's World" for me. I liked "Give a Man a Horse". I also like to ride horses. I hope there will be more articles like this.

*Vivek, Bombay*

My sisters and I have been collecting "Children's World" for the past 6 years,

when I couldn't even understand the stories well. But now I find the stories and the features most interesting. What we miss in the magazine are Jokes.

*Iravati Gowariker, Trivandrum*

Dear Readers,

That was a veritable bouquet of flowers — of different sizes, shapes, and shades! One way of thanking you is to give you whatever you have asked for. All these will come to you sooner or later. Meanwhile, just to whet your appetite: we commemorate the 200th anniversary of ballooning with a short feature on the first ever flight of a hot-air balloon. It now transpires that man was just not satisfied with getting to know how to fly. By and by he wondered whether he couldn't jump down from an aircraft to the earth. And it took him a little over another hundred years to improvise a device — almost like a balloon — to attempt a safe jump. That was the parachute. We begin a series on parachutes and para-jumping in the next issue which, we wish to remind you, will be a special number. There will be diagrams to describe this exciting exercise, besides action photographs. We propose to follow this up with a series on sky-diving and its most modern versions. We are happy that "Kapish" lives in your cherished memories. We have introduced one more "Comics" series from this issue. Won't you be glad to know that "Tales for Children" come from Yugoslavia? A brief write-up also tells you how the well-known illustrator, Frank Bolle, took to drawing for children. Yet another new feature from this issue is a page of news photos that come *exclusive* for your magazine. And "last, but not the least" is "Puzzles with Prize". Here's good luck to you all!

**EDITOR**

"NO, Dad, I won't part with Tiger. He is mine for ever. You cannot take Tiger away," screamed Raghu, as he hugged the three-year-old dog.

"Raghu, we already have two other dogs," his father argued. "What difference does it make if we give Tiger to Mr. Joshi? He likes Tiger. And I have promised to give him Tiger. After all, you are fond of Uncle Joshi, aren't you?"

"Yes, Dad, I like him very much. But why Tiger? Give him Misha. Give him Tony. Tiger is my dog. He is my best friend. How happy is he when I return from school. He likes to go with me to the park. There we play Hide-and-seek. Oh! What fun we have together. Misha is grumpy. Tony is cheeky. Only Tiger is cheerful. I love him, Dad! Let Uncle Joshi take Misha. Or Tony; I won't feel sorry. But, Tiger... oh, no. Please don't give away Tiger! Please."

"Raghu, Misha is a very loving dog. You have not tried to befriend her. Tony is naughty, and you can have all the fun in his company. Tiger will go to Uncle. That's final," said Raghu's father, and the boy knew there was no appeal.

"Oh, Tiger... Tiger, my dear!" Raghu sobbed as his father left the room. At that moment, he hated everyone — Dad, Uncle Joshi. He hated himself. He slumped on the floor. He patted Tiger gently. Then he mumbled into the ears of the dog. "So, you'll go away and I'll be left all alone. Uncle Joshi will come this evening to take you away. Do you understand?" Raghu poured out his heart to him.

Tiger sensed that something was wrong. But he could not guess what it was all about. He moaned softly, licking Raghu's hands to show his



affection.

Suddenly, Raghu stopped crying. "I'm sorry, Tiger. We've very little time left to ourselves. So, today, we'll spend all the time together. Come on, we'll go and play in the park. Maybe, we'll even take the boat on the lake for sometime. That's how we'll spend the last day together." Raghu went on speaking while he stood up, changed his dress, and shouted to his mother, "Amma, I'm going to the park with Tiger. I will be back soon."

"Be careful when you cross the road, Raghu. And come back in time for lunch, understand?" his mother's voice floated in.

"All right, Amma," Raghu responded.

He picked up a tennis ball, ran out of the gate. Tiger followed him, often pausing to sniff at any hard object he spotted along the footpath, but rushing back to Raghu as soon as he called out.

Raghu paused at the zebra crossing. He waited for the traffic to stop so that he could cross. Then he moved over, with Tiger close behind. Soon they reached the park. At the park, Raghu ran at top speed. Tiger ran after him. Raghu ducked, swerved, dodged, but Tiger was always close behind. It was great fun, running helter-skelter with Tiger closing in. Raghu stopped at the centre of the park. He threw the ball up in the air. Tiger trailed along, tracking the ball. He caught the ball easily in his wide open mouth as it fell. Then he brought the ball to Raghu. Raghu threw the ball up again. Tiger did not miss the catch. It was a game they played every day.

Raghu rested for a while under the tree, while Tiger chased some sparrows. He growled when the birds took to their wings as he closed in on them. He then ran after some squirrels. He sent them scampering for cover. They ran up the tree, winding round the trunk, stopping occasionally to look at Tiger with contempt.

"Hi, Raghu!" A voice roused Raghu from his reverie.

Raghu turned and saw his friend Sukumar. Tiger ran to Sukumar and sniffed at his feet, wagged his tail, and then ran after a squirrel which dared to dart from one tree to another.

"Shall we go rowing, Raghu?" asked Sukumar. He loved rowing. Raghu often went for rowing with Sukumar.

"Of course, but we'll take Tiger, too, with us. Tiger has never been on a boat. He may not get another chance,"

said Raghu, in a faltering voice.

"Why not?" asked Sukumar.

"Because my Dad has promised to give Tiger away to Uncle Joshi. And he'll come and take him away this evening."

"But you'll still have Misha and Tony," Sukumar tried to console Raghu.

"Misha, the grumpy? Tony, the cheeky? Who wants them? I love Tiger. No other dog can take his place," Raghu sobbed out his heart.

"Oh! Come on, we'll take Tiger with us on the boat," Sukumar reached out to Raghu, dragged him up, waited till Raghu collected his ball, and moved off towards the lake. Tiger followed the two friends at their heels.

Sukumar, though only eight years old, was very good at rowing. Raghu was a year younger to Sukumar. They were good friends. Sukumar rowed the boat. It moved away from the shore. The oars lapped the surface of the water. Raghu hummed a tune. As the boat moved into the centre of the lake, the trees and the buildings receded. Tiger stood at one end, watching the white froth gather on the lake where the oars struck the water.

Suddenly, one of the oars slipped from Sukumar's hands. He leaned forward to catch the oar. But the oar moved away. Raghu shouted, "Tiger, get it!"

That was enough for Tiger. In a trice, he jumped into the water. In the backslap, the boat wobbled. Then it toppled. Raghu found himself tottering on the water. Sukumar was waddling to keep himself afloat.

Tiger caught the oar in his mouth, and moved to Sukumar. But Sukumar was not interested in the oar. He began to swim towards the shore. Then

he realised that Raghu was unable to swim. "My God!" Sukumar turned towards Raghu. Raghu was bobbing up and down in the water. Sukumar panicked. He did not know what to do. He looked towards the shore. There was no one in view.

Sukumar did not know what to do. Raghu was struggling to keep himself afloat. Sukumar decided to swim to the shore to get help. He then saw Tiger seizing Raghu by the hand. The dog began to swim, dragging Raghu along. That inspired Sukumar, too. He swam close to Raghu, and muttered, "Keep moving your legs, I'll hold the other hand. Tiger and I will take you to the shore."

Raghu nodded.

It was a difficult task. But Tiger and Sukumar, between them, managed to take Raghu with them half the distance. They felt tired. Sukumar saw the boatman coming down the footpath, close to the shore. He screamed, "Help! We're in trouble!"

The voice cut through the air. The boatman looked round, saw the two boys and the dog struggling in the water. He realised what had happened. He did not lose any time. He jumped into another boat, rowed with all his strength. Soon, he rescued the boys and the dog.

"Tiger saved me, Dad," Raghu told his father, later at home.

"Yes, Uncle, I didn't know what to do. But Tiger showed me what could be done. If he had not been there, I don't know what would have happened to Raghu," Sukumar added.

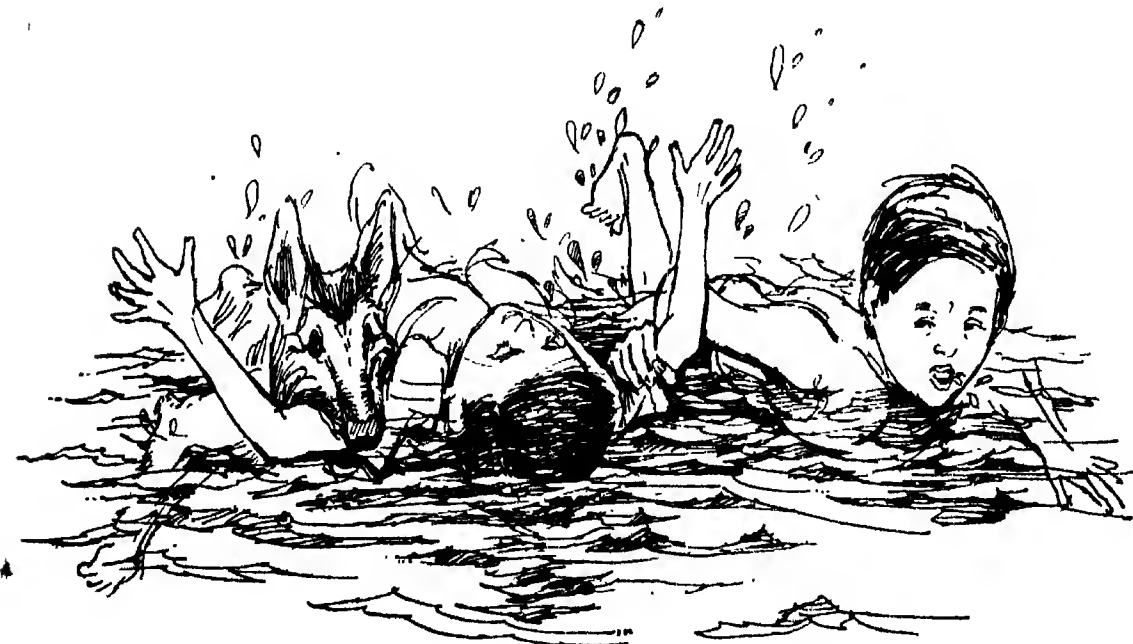
"Well done, Tiger!" Raghu's Dad caressed the dog.

"Dad!" Raghu lent to his voice a touch of helplessness.

"Yes, Raghu," his father wondered what the boy had in mind.

"Can I keep Tiger?" asked Raghu.

"Why not?" Raghu heard someone say. It was not his Dad. It was Uncle Joshi. "I heard how Tiger saved your



life. I know that you want to keep Tiger. Keep him, Raghu. I'll take one of your other dogs. Aren't you happy?"

Raghu beamed a happy smile, while Tiger ran around wagging his tail, un-

able to understand what the fuss was all about.

R.K. Murthi

(Based on a true story)

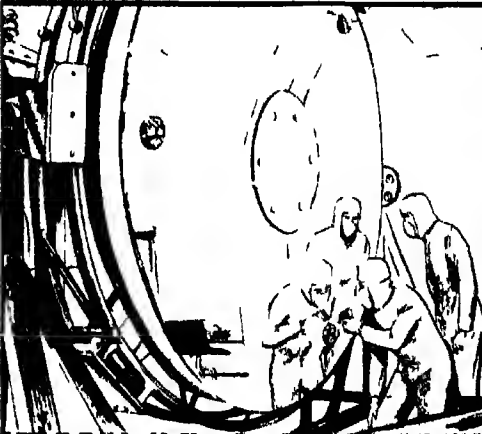
## CLICK! CLICK! (See facing page)

Clockwise, from top left. **STARDOM:** Scott Sherrin (10) is literally leaping to stardom in London's smash hit show, "Bugsy Malone", in which he plays Fizzy, a poor boy who dreams of fame. **CUB SQUAD:** The bounding one year-olds — Sarah, Caroline, Michael, and Victoria — quadruplets born to Sue Pooney, of Rochford, Essex, have been given egg-cups with names, lest there is any mad scramble at breakfast time! **BEAK TO BEAK:** Soma, the London Zoo condor, celebrates her first birthday (May 20) by giving her keeper, Derek Wood, an affectionate peck on the nose. An Andean

condor, she is the first of her kind to be reared successfully in Britain. She weighs 22 lb and has a wingspan of 9 ft. **ON THE SCALES:** 3-year-old Dilberta balances herself on her two right legs as she is weighed on the scales at London Zoo, registering 1,500 lb. **PRINCE TEDDY:** "Is it for me, Prince Charles, or the little baby?" asked Princess Diana when she was presented with this bulk teddy-bear by two handicapped children Ivan (1) and Victoria (3) of Canterbury (not seen in the picture). They replied "For Prince William's birthday!"


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D. J. M. I.

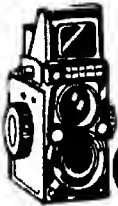


**"A" FOR EFFORT**  
**ALDO BRAVO** of Anchorage  
Alaska  
has four brothers named  
Alino, Allan, Aubrey, Akim  
and four children named  
Aldo Jr., Athalia, Arek, Adam.

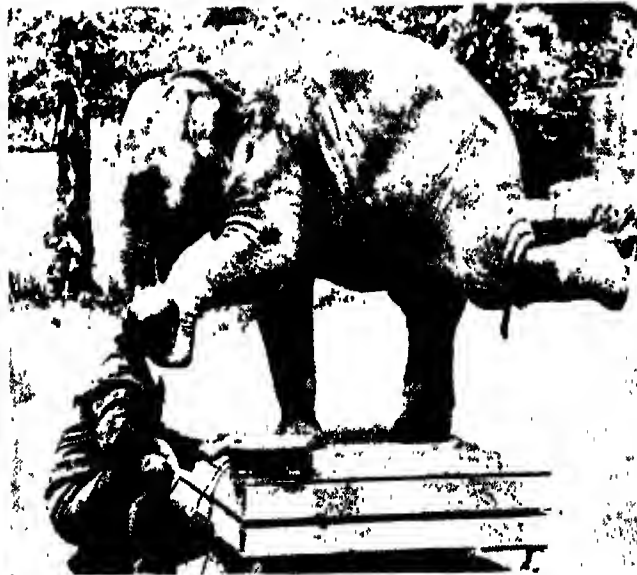


**THE 50,000 NUCLEAR WARHEADS**  
that now exist throughout the world possess  
the explosive yield of some 20,000,000,000  
tons of TNT — about **1,600,000 TIMES MORE**  
**POWERFUL THAN THE ATOM BOMB**  
**DROPPED ON HIROSHIMA, JAPAN**

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**Click! Click!**





*This is a Japanese legend. Japan, as we all know, is plagued by earthquakes, typhoons, and terrible tidal waves, even today. The story is about the heroism and determination of a single individual to save the lives of the people of his village in the island, even by setting on fire all the rice stacks he has just harvested. It shows the discipline and struggle of the Japanese people against natural calamities.*

“O H. .how terrible!” Gombe shouted, as he rushed out of his house quaking with fear. .

The earthquake was over. Gombe, being in this small island off the coast of Japan, was quite used to them. But this time the tremors had lasted long, and now the weird rumble echoing from the bowels of the earth was really terrifying.

Gombe looked down uneasily at the village nestling below the hill. It seem-

ed that the villagers, busy preparing for the harvest festival, had not even noticed the earthquake.

Suddenly, he looked up to the sea and gaped, horror-stricken. The wind was blowing in the wrong direction from the land towards the sea!

"Oh God! Help! A tidal wave is upon us!" shrieked Gombe, as heavy gales swept from the shore hurling the waves away from the beach, revealing sandy wastes and black rocks.

"The whole village will be swallowed in a single gulp gosh!" thought Gombe. Rushing into his hut, he ran out again, holding a flaming torch of pinewood.

On his fields in front lay stacks of harvested rice piled high, ready to be stored away in his barn.

"All this will be destroyed," thought Gombe, "but I must save the villagers at any cost!"

A tight feeling of pain and fear seemed to buckle up his insides.

His legs trembled, but his hand was steady as he thrust the fiery torch into the rice stacks.

In a second the flames caught.... sparks leapt like frightened fireflies, fanned by the sweeping wind.

Brittle rice stacks crackling. Red hot flames hissing, destroying.

Now all the stacks were aflame like a gigantic torch, pointing heavenwards.

Gombe flung the torch away. Vacantly, he stood as if lost in some terrible nightmare searching something far away.

The sun had set and a grey blue twilight was making the hills hazy.

Flames from the rice stacks were leaping up and up, as if to burn the sky!

At the mountain temple, bells pealed out. "Fire Fire Gombe's hut is on fire!"

Some youngsters among the villagers ran hurriedly up the incline. Then came the other men, women, and children as if in a hot chase.





To Gombe as he stared down impatiently, they looked irritatingly slow like ants.

At last, some young boys clambered up, running hard to quench the flames.

Gombe roared, "Leave that alone! Call all the villagers here, here.. HERE!"

The villagers came.. more and more. Running, falling, jumping. All the village folk gathered together.

Gombe ran.. from one person to another. Even now people were scrambling up. Shouting their names, he counted them eagerly, one by one.

"Has Gombe gone mad?" thought the villagers, gaping at him bewildered. They stared at his blazing rice stacks, and then at his face.

Suddenly Gombe turned, shouting with all his strength. "Look look, here it comes!"

Everyone turned to see where he pointed.. piercing the smoky haze of the dusk.

Far away in the distant horizon, a faint line like a thin black nerve seemed to rise and throb in the sky. Within seconds, it grew huge, filling up the entire horizon, rushing towards them at a tremendous speed.

"A tidal wave!" someone screamed.

Before them the entire sea rose up like a massive wall, hurtling upon the beach with a tremendous terrifying roar.. blowing the ears apart.

The people leapt back. For that one blinding moment, except for the foamy watermist, nothing could be seen.

Then they saw the sea, like a force, insane, violent, untamed, sweep over their entire village!

Again and again it hurled over twice.. thrice..

The villagers looking down from the hill stood bewildered, staring humbly

at their devastated village, as if scooped out and flung back, by the gigantic tidal wave.

The fire of the rice stacks fanned by the wind, burned and flared again. It cast a warm red glow on the villagers, making them slowly aware that their lives had been spared only because of it!

Thankfully, silently, folding their hands, they fell on bended knees, before the courageous Gombe.

Hema Pande

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### FRANK BOLLE

WE introduce to our readers a new illustrated series, **TALES FOR CHILDREN** (see facing page). The illustrator is **FRANK BOLLE**. He was born on June 23, 1924, in Brooklyn, New York. As a child he drew pictures on any piece of paper he could find. His teachers encouraged him to become an artist. After elementary school, he went to the High School of Music and Art, a special school that helped to develop talented students. Frank later graduated to an art college — the Pratt Institute.

Frank Bolle has illustrated comic books, several children's books, book covers, and adventure magazines. For many years, he was doing a daily strip called **DEBBIE DEERE**, a story about a newspaper woman who got involved with people in trying to solve their problems. When that ended, Frank returned to illustrating books and covers. For himself, Frank enjoys painting water colours and painting portraits in oil.

"Tales for Children", in preparing which Frank Bolle is assisted by a team of writers, will appear as 3-page episodes.

## TALES FOR CHILDREN

# CLEVER TREVOR AND HIS BAG OF TRICKS

TREVOR WAS A VERY INQUISITIVE LITTLE BOY AND HAD A CUTE LITTLE DOG NAMED CHIPPY. CHIPPY WENT EVERYWHERE WITH TREVOR BECAUSE SHE WAS CURIOUS ABOUT ALL THE ADVENTUROUS PLACES TREVOR LED HER TO.



TREVOR NEEDED MANY THINGS BECAUSE MANY THINGS INTERESTED HIM. HIS POCKETS WERE ALWAYS FULL OF IMPORTANT THINGS THAT HE WOULD FIND. HIS MOTHER SAID HE COLLECTED JUNK. TREVOR CLAIMED IT WAS VALUABLE JUNK!

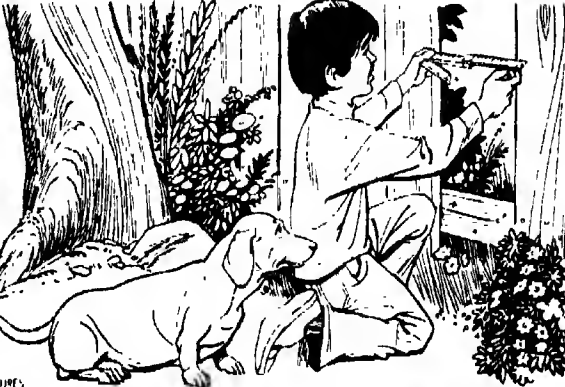


HE NEEDED A MAGNIFYING GLASS TO SEE LITTLE INSECTS BECAUSE INSECTS INTERESTED HIM VERY MUCH. "LOOK, CHIP, A CATERPILLAR!" CHIPPY SNIFFED. SHE CHECKED EVERYTHING THAT TREVOR STOPPED TO EXAMINE.

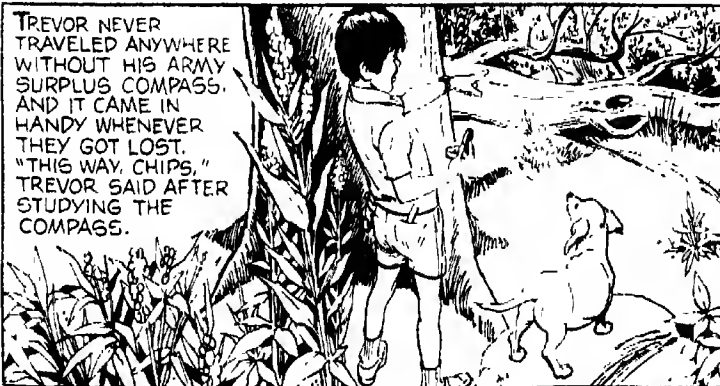


HE NEEDED A FOLDING RULER TO MEASURE THINGS. "WE CAN GO THROUGH HERE BECAUSE NOW WE KNOW THAT THE SPACE IS BIG ENOUGH!" CHIPPY WAGGED HER TAIL AND FOLLOWED.

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TREVOR NEVER TRAVELED ANYWHERE WITHOUT HIS ARMY SURPLUS COMPASS. AND IT CAME IN HANDY WHENEVER THEY GOT LOST. "THIS WAY, CHIPS," TREVOR SAID AFTER STUDYING THE COMPASS.



IT WAS ALWAYS NECESSARY TO HAVE A LONG STRING AND A MAGNET TO PICK UP A KEY TO ADD TO HIS COLLECTION.



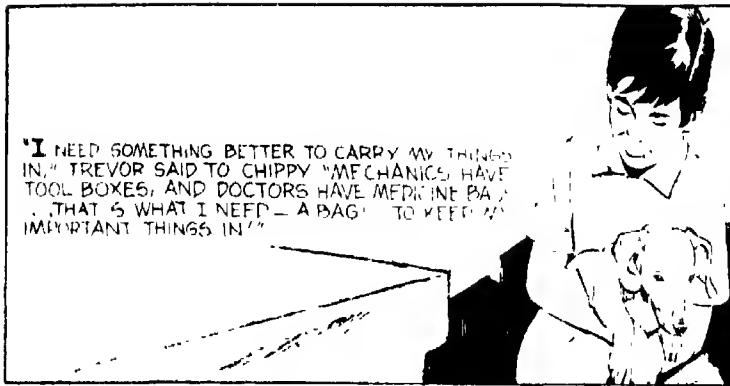
BUT HAVING ALL THESE VALUABLE TREASURES DIDN'T MAKE HIS MOM TOO HAPPY. SHE COMPLAINED THAT ALL THAT JUNK TORE HOLES IN HIS PANTS POCKETS.



TREVOR WOULDN'T PART WITH ANY OF HIS IMPORTANT JUNK — BUT HE WAS CLEVER ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT HIS POCKETS WEREN'T THE BEST PLACE TO KEEP ALL HIS STUFF. SO HE HAD TO THINK OF SOMETHING CLEVER TO SOLVE HIS PROBLEM... AND SOON!

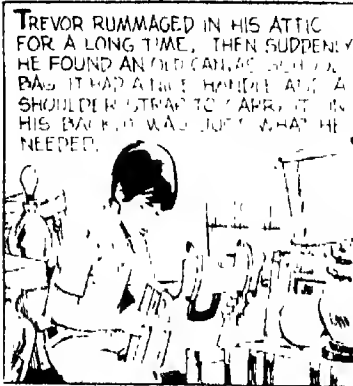
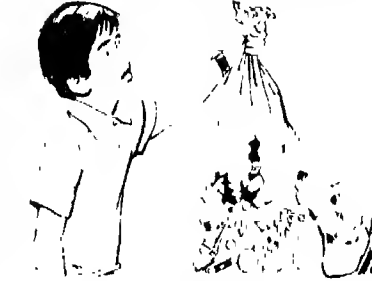
STORY AND PICTURES BY: FRANK BOLE





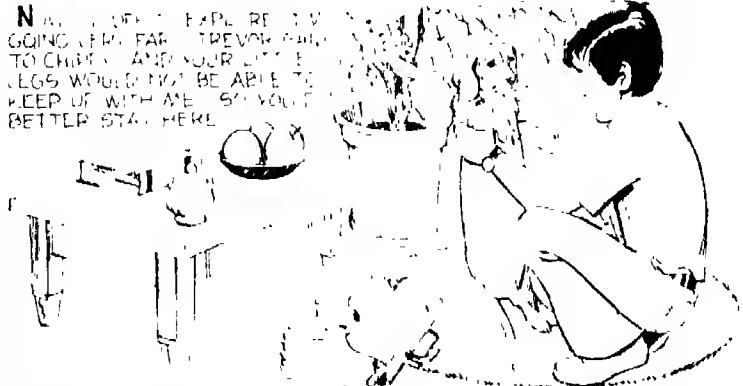
"I NEED SOMETHING BETTER TO CARRY MY THINGS IN," TREVOR SAID TO CHIPPY. "MECHANICS HAVE TOOL BOXES, AND DOCTORS HAVE MEDICINE BAGS. THAT IS WHAT I NEED—A BAG TO KEEP MY IMPORTANT THINGS IN!"

SO TREVOR GOT HIMSELF A NICE BAG. "NOT BAD," HE THOUGHT. "I CAN GET JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING IN HERE.. OH, NO!" HE SAID AS EVERYTHING FELL OUT. "THAT WASN'T SUCH A GREAT IDEA."



TREVOR RUMMAGED IN HIS ATTIC FOR A LONG TIME, THEN SUDDENLY HE FOUND AN OLD CANVAS SACK. THE BAG IT HAD A LONG HANDLE AND A SHOULDER STRAP TO CARRY IT. IN HIS MIND IT WAS JUST WHAT HE NEEDED.

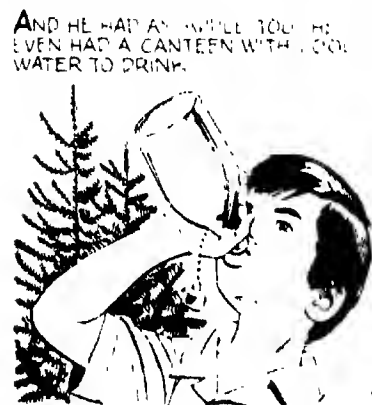
NOW I DON'T HAVE TO GO GOING VERY FAR. TREVOR SAID TO CHIPPY. "AND YOUR LONG LEGS WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO KEEP UP WITH ME. SO YOU BETTER STAY HERE."



USING HIS COMPASS AND MAP, TREVOR DECIDED TO GO EXPLORING CLEAR AROUND THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LAKE WHERE HE HAD NEVER BEEN BEFORE.



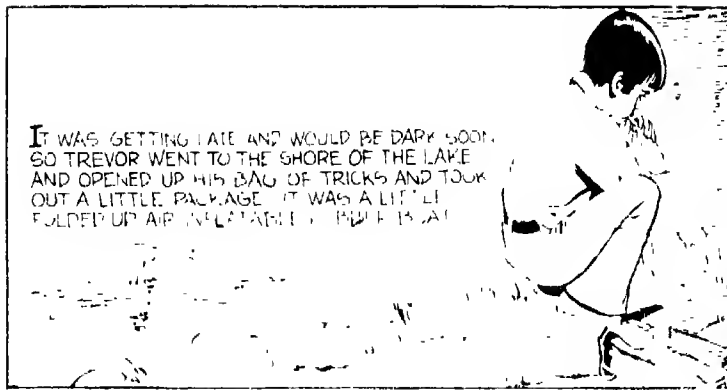
HOWEVER, AFTER TREVOR REACHED THE OTHER SIDE, HE REALIZED HE WAS LOST. HE HAD NO IDEA WHERE HE WAS. HE HAD NO BAG THAT WASN'T FULL OF THE THINGS.



AND HE HAD AN IDEAL TOO. HE EVEN HAD A CANTEEN WITH 1,000 WATER TO DRINK.

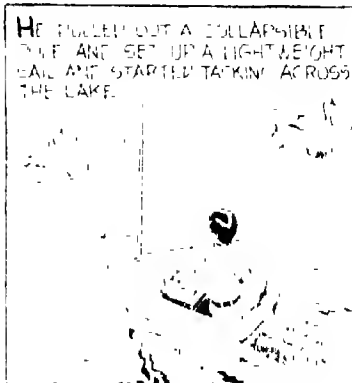
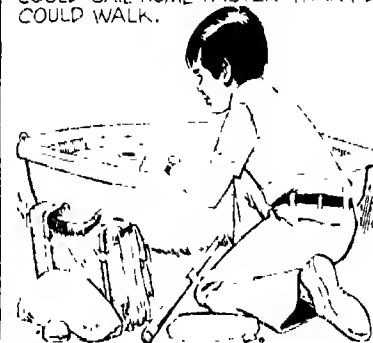


THEN TREVOR NOTICED HOW LOW THE SUN WAS IN THE SKY. HE THOUGHT HE HAD BETTER GO BACK TO HIS HOME. HE CHECKED HIS BAG AND FOUND HE HAD NO WATER. HE WATCHED THE DECIDED TO HEAD FOR HOME IN A SHORT WHILE IT WOULD BE DARK.

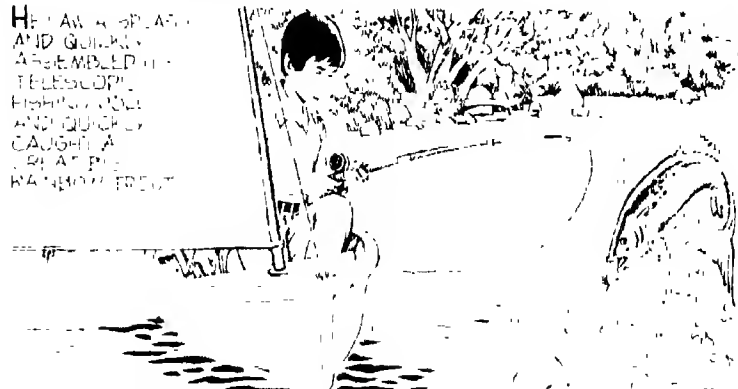


IT WAS GETTING LATE AND WOULD BE DARK SOON, SO TREVOR WENT TO THE SHORE OF THE LAKE AND OPENED UP HIS BAG OF TRICKS AND TOOK OUT A LITTLE PACKAGE. IT WAS A LITTLE FOLDED UP AIR INFLATABLE. TREVOR IS A

AS HE FLEW IT UP TREVOR KNEW HE COULD SAIL HOME FASTER THAN HE COULD WALK.



HE PULLED OUT A COLLAPSIBLE TUBE AND SET UP A LIGHTWEIGHT SAIL AND STARTED TACKLING ACROSS THE LAKE.



HE HAD A SPYGLASS AND QUICKLY ASSEMBLED HIS TELESCOPE. FISHING HOOKS AND QUICKLY CAUGHT A FISH AT THE WATER'S FRONT.



THE BOAT SAILOR REACHED THE SHORE AND THERE WAS LITTLE WAITING FOR HIM WITH HER TAIL WAGGING. WITHOUT WASTING ANY TIME THEY BOTH RAN UP THE HILL TO HIS HOUSE.



WAITING IN TREVOR'S MOTHER GREETED HIM. "I'M GLAD YOU WEREN'T FAR AWAY, TREVOR, BECAUSE IT'S ALREADY DARK AND IT'S ALMOST DINNER TIME."



TREVOR PROUDLY HANDED HIS FISH TO HIS MOTHER. "LOOK MOM, I JUST CAUGHT THIS BEAUTY. IT SURE WOULD TASTE GOOD FOR DINNER."



WITH THAT TREVOR BREATHE A BUSH OF RELIEF AND FONDLY PATTED HIS BAG OF TRICKS FOR HE WOULD NEVER HAVE MADE IT HOME IF NOT FOR WITHOUT.

DIST. BY ASIA FEATURES



*Dear squashes and lemons and ices,  
Isn't it hot hot hot?  
I wish there was a cooler spot  
Where I could see  
Floating by me  
Mangoes in ice-cream tea.*

If you don't like that one, here's another:

*The sun is a pig  
A caterpillar in a wig  
Who thinks it funny  
To keep us sticky  
And warm and cross and hig.*

(Hig is a new word)

Don't you agree I have got the feel very well? The feel of summer, feeling hot and irritated and out of sorts and wishing so much that baths could go on forever. Hey, you inventors—why don't you invent some food that can be eaten under a shower, and books that can be read there, and a mattress and pillow that won't get wet?

By the way I invented this new word, hig

Maybe it was the heat or maybe something else. But whatever it was,

Raghu and I got into a big fight. Actually, Raghu has become extremely bossy of late, calling me names and making out that I would be nowhere without him.

(Hig is a new word, I invented it. It means obstinate, eg. Raghu is hig, very hig).

"Where," shouted Raghu, "would you be without me?"

I ask you—where would I be? Happier, that's where. But I didn't tell him that, of course. You see, the whole fight was because Raghu wanted my football to take with him. He was going to his aunt's house for the holidays.

"No, Raghu," I said, very **politely**, let me tell you. "I think I'll miss my football if I gave it to you."

"What do you mean?" yelled the chap. "Is it a cat or a dog or something that you'll miss it?"

"That's not it," I agreed. "It's not a cat or a dog, but all the same, I have developed a great affection, a strong sense of—"

"Shut up!" higgered Raghu.



(Hig can also mean extremely bad mannered, eg., above.)

So, "Shut up," higgled Raghu. "Will you or will you not give me your football for two short weeks?"

"I will give you anything," I told him. "My life. My worldly wealth. The shape of my nose. My charm."

"But not your football?" Raghu interrupted.

"Not my football," I said sadly.

Raghu higgled off.

(Hig, in some cases, also means slamming the door, running down the steps, raking the gate, and leaving it open for all the cows and goats and flies to get in.)

It was a great relief, I tell you, not



to have Raghu around. Such peace! I read books, all the ones I have read a thousand times. I slept. I ate. I played with my brother. I helped my mother, and broke only two of the china dolls on top of the radio. Without Raghu, I was Perky, myself. I dusted my football fondly. I even sang in the bathroom.

But now it's two days since Raghu left. Two whole big days. I wish I could fly to the moon or drape myself on an iceberg. I wish I could be a fish in the sea. I wish I could be rain.

I wish I had given my football to Raghu.

(Hig rhymes with pig—that's all.)

*Yours higgledly piggedly*

*Perky*

## "My dear Perky"

*My dear Per-Po-Po-Ky,*

It's a long time since I have written to you. For your lo-long absence, I thought you were abroad day-dr-dreaming. I was to write to "Children's World" about your ab-bab-sense. You stopped me from writing to you. I am ang-urg-ry with you. You are really a nitfit-mit. Can you really become a co-cow-boy?

I was happy to he-car that you have taken your revenge. Bye-By-Bo.

*Yours SIT-SAT-FIT-FAT*

*FRIEND Archana (Archana Mishra)*

*Dear A-A-Aach- Archoo,*

Sorry, I'b got a bad cold. Arch-Archoo. Dose blocked ad all that. If you write again, I bay feel better. So bill you?

*Your*

*Pe-Perkoooo*



I was a real hot summer evening. My parents had gone out to attend a dinner party and our servant had gone up to his quarter. Though it was past 9 o'clock, the temperature was still above forty degrees. The ceiling fan circulated hot air, and whatever we touched was hot, the bedsheet, the pillow, and the water bottle beside the bed. We turned from our stomach onto our backs, but just couldn't sleep.

"Hey, Madhu!" called Arun my brother, from his room. "Shall we sleep outside on the back lawn?"

"That's a fantastic idea," shouted Madhulika.

"Wonderful!" I agreed and wondered why we hadn't thought of it earlier. We pulled the light cane beds from the guest room to the lawn and lay down.

The night was dark and quiet. I looked up into the sky with its millions of

sparkling and glimmering stars. Ah, this was better. Now we would sleep. But I was wrong. The night was not that quiet, it was filled with strange mysterious sounds. Was that only a dog that barked in the distance? And why was that child crying?

I reached for my sister's hand. "Madhu," I whispered, "are you asleep?"

"No," whispered Madhu.

"I am afraid..."

My brother opened his eyes and asked, "What are you afraid of?"

"Of ghosts," I whispered.

"Ghosts?" laughed my brother. "Don't be funny. There are no ghosts. Now close your eyes and go to sleep."

I closed my eyes, but when I couldn't sleep, I looked round the backyard I thought I knew so well. But tonight, in the faint moonlight, it looked so strange.

I couldn't see the lauki plants, nor the sunflowers, nor the jasmine bushes. The whole garden was filled with strange black shadows that swayed in the mind. And there, at the back of the garden, I could see a figure in a long white dress with long flapping arms, and, oh god, oh god, it had no head! "A ghost, a ghost!"

I wanted to cry, wanted to run away, but I couldn't. I couldn't move at all. All I could do was to stare helplessly at the white headless figure that threw up its arms and jumped high into the air, ready to run towards me. My heart missed a beat. Then I jumped up and cried, "Ahhhhhh ummmmm."

My cry shattered the stillness of the night.

"What's it, Geeta? Geeta!" cried my sister and drew me into her arms.

"Ahhhhhhhhhhmm," I cried once more.

"Where is the thief? Where?" shouted my brother, and was out of bed in a second.

"There, there!" I cried with tears running down my cheeks. "The ghost, the ghost, it is catching me!" I pointed out where the big white ghost was hiding in the dark.

"A ghost? Nonsense!" said my brother. "There are no ghosts." He searched around for a stick and as he found one, he shouted, "Come out, ghost. I'll show you!"

And he rushed towards the mango tree there, where I had seen the ghost hiding.

"Arun, Arun!" I cried. "No, no, don't go there!"

But my brother had already vanished into the pitch-black darkness.

"Arun!" my sister and I cried. But we received no answer. The night was quiet.

It seemed to have swallowed my



brother. Or was it the ghost?

Suddenly we heard somebody laugh.

The ghost? No. It was my brother!

"Hi hi ho ho ha ha," he sniggered.

"Come here and meet the ghost. Come here, Madhu. Bring Geeta along. Hoo hoo ha ha. It's too funny."

Madhulika wiped my face with the hem of her nightdress.

"There are no ghosts, Geeta," she said very gently, "don't be afraid. Come, let's see what Arun has found."

She took me by the hand and led me through the dark garden. As we came closer to the mango tree we could see Arun standing next to the tree with the washing, peeping over my mother's white night dress, flapping its long sleeves.

"Bhumm! I am a ghost! Run for your life!" he cried, and looked so funny that Madhulika and even I had to laugh.

Siguru Srivastava





### THE STORY SO FAR

Examinations over, Biju and Pratap heave a sigh of relief. As they plan a movie programme, 'police' Appu joins them. He had earned the nick name after he had, like a daredevil, succeeded in separating two ruffians grappling in front of their school. Appu guesses, the idea of a movie must have come from P. Pratap (as he is popularly known among his friends, from the day he wet his pants though he was then only a student of Class 1). Appu suggests, they should remind their master, Rajasekhar, of his promise of a picnic. Their classmates Smitha, Vinita, Gopi, and John approve enthusiastically. In the Staff room, Rajasekhar asks them where they would like to go. Smitha's choice is the Dam. But that is rather far away. Appu suggests Kali Hills. But who will want to go there even in broad daylight? Rajasekhar mentions the ancient Koickal Palace. He also promises to get hold of the school bus and asks the children to meet him again the next morning to finalise the programme. They are in for a

surprise the next day. Their teacher, Sarada, too, is to join them for the picnic!

On Sunday, the children are all excited as they get into the bus. They forget themselves in singing and chatting till they reach Koickal Palace an hour-and-a-half later. As they move about the 17th century Palace, from one room to another, Rajasekhar tells them of its history. Later, they adjourn to the park around. After a leisurely lunch, followed by some music from Sarada, the children are allowed to roam about in the garden, with instructions to get back to the park in an hour's time. Appu, Pratap, Biju, and John reach the nearby forest from where they have a good view of the Kali Hills. John wonders why people are so scared of the hills. Well, Pratap has a story to tell them.

It appears the ancient temple was built by a sage. The idol depicted 'Bhadrakali' in an angry mood and was frightening to look at. Little wonder, therefore, that nobody went there. The few who dared to go up the hill

and the temple with any intention other than worship had all met with tragedy. Like the Englishman, Watson, who raised a tea estate around the hill with the help of labour from far-away villages. The very day he moved into his new bungalow with his wife, the two fell from their terrace and died. Or like the young man three years later. People saw him wave his handkerchief from the terrace of the haunted bungalow. He was never seen again. Or like the three adventurers, who went by jeep as far as the vehicle could take them. While climbing, one of them slipped and fell and broke his leg, and the others had to carry him down to a hospital. That was 20 years ago, says Pratap, adding that the place now only echoes strange noises.

All this is "nonsense" to 'police' Appu. He assures his friends that he will go up the hill one day and show them that "these stories are just rubbish". Before the others can caution him against any such "derring-do", they are called by their teachers. It's time to go home.

"We've had a nice time," remarks Appu, little knowing what is in store for them.

As Rajasekhari counts the children when they board the bus, he finds one missing — Vinita. She was last seen in the rose garden, the children tell him. Where has she disappeared? Rajasekhari and some of the boys go in three search parties to comb the garden, park, and the forest area around. There is no trace of the little girl. Rajasekhari stays back to continue the search and sends the others back home with instructions to inform the headmaster, police, and Vinita's mother. Unlike their morning journey full of mirth, the children return sad and silent.

Vinita's mother, Mrs. Panicker, recovers from the initial shock and arranges for a telegram to go to her husband, a Customs official in Bombay. The police are duly alerted, and by the time they all settle down to think of further steps, Rajasekhari comes back. He has drawn a blank. It is a sad end to an enjoyable picnic.

## CHAPTER V : Palace Mysteries

THAT night Appu was restless. Every time he closed his eyes, he dreamt of little Vinita wandering in the forest all alone. The moment it was dawn and he heard movements in the house, he too got up and went for an early bath.

When his mother saw him all dressed up, she asked him, "Are you going out somewhere?"

"Yes, Amma, I'll just run up to Pratap's," said Appu.

"You'd better eat your breakfast before you go, it's ready," said his mother.

"Amma, I don't feel like eating anything," he said, "just give me a glass of milk."

Appu soon reached Pratap's house. Everybody there was at the breakfast table. Pratap's mother asked him to join them,

but Appu declined the invitation. "No, amma, I just don't feel like eating anything."

By the time Pratap finished his breakfast, Biju arrived. "Daddy has just come back from Vinita's house," he told his friends. "No, there is still no news of her. Her father is expected here by the evening."

"There must be some way we can help find Vinita," said Pratap.

"We'll think of a plan of action," said Appu. "Let's first get out. Have both of you any money on you?"

"I still have this year's Vislukettam (Vishu gift) with me," said Pratap. "I'll go and bring it. I'll also take Mummy's permission to go out."

He went inside and was back with them in less than two minutes. "Come on, let's go."

The three friends ran out. "There's nothing we can do here. Let's go to the palace," said Appu on the way. "We should be able to find something there."

They took a bus and went to Koickal Palace. As they walked towards the main entrance to the palace, they saw people there. They could make out two policemen among them. As they went nearer, they

also recognised their Headmaster, their teacher Mr. Rajasekhar, and Vinita's mother. There was one more person. "Who's that tall man in the blue shirt?" asked Appu.

"That's Vini's uncle," Biju told them.

"Let's avoid them. The Headmaster will be angry if he were to see us here."

They went round the compound up to the other entrance to the palace on the eastern side. The main gate was closed, but there was a wicket gate, and they went in through that.

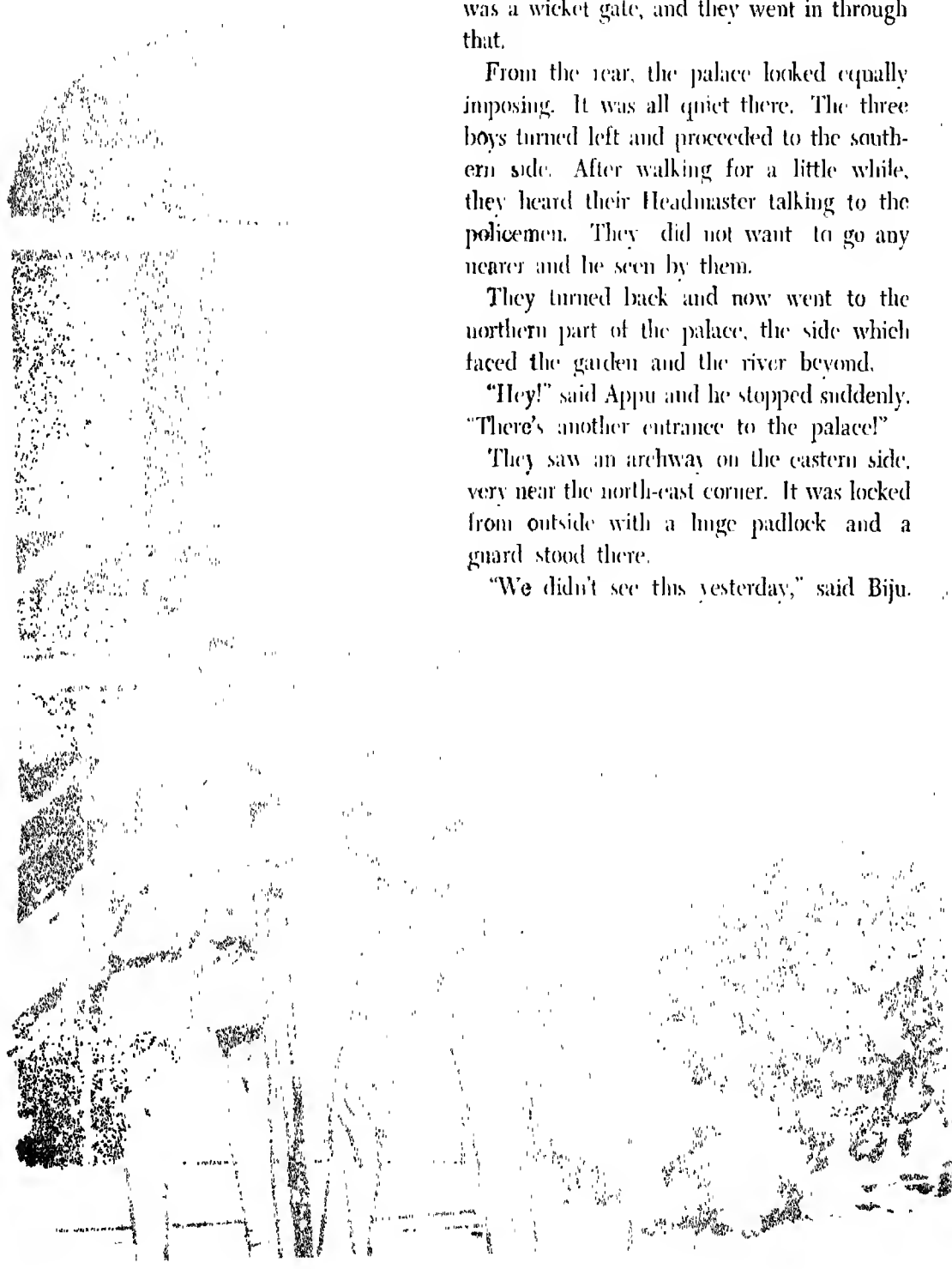
From the rear, the palace looked equally imposing. It was all quiet there. The three boys turned left and proceeded to the southern side. After walking for a little while, they heard their Headmaster talking to the policemen. They did not want to go any nearer and be seen by them.

They turned back and now went to the northern part of the palace, the side which faced the garden and the river beyond.

"Hey!" said Appu and he stopped suddenly. "There's another entrance to the palace!"

They saw an archway on the eastern side, very near the north-east corner. It was locked from outside with a huge padlock and a guard stood there.

"We didn't see this yesterday," said Biju.



"True," said Pratap, "but, then, we didn't come this side at all yesterday."

"Hey! You there! What do you want?" asked the guard. "What are you looking for, you boys?"

Appu went near him and said, "We just came to see the palace. Could you open the door and let us inside?"

"No, this door is never opened. This leads to the chambers where the Maharajah used to live. This is not open to visitors. The last time this was opened was more than 15 years ago," the guard explained.

The boys knew there was no use pleading with him. They slowly walked to the northern side of the palace. As they were turning the corner, Pratap had a glance of a bearded man in a shirt slowly walking in from the western side through the wicket gate.

Pratap signalled to the others to stop and remain silent. He stood at the corner hiding himself from the guard and the bearded man.

"Hello, Shankar," said the man. "Having visitors early morning?"

Pratap noticed his peculiar voice.

"Oh! those boys? They wanted to get in and see the chambers, Anand Saheb."

"The chambers! What a request! Who are those boys, anyway?"

"Must be some school children enjoying their vacation. Nothing to worry. By the

way, how is your arm, Anand Saheb?"

The bearded man rolled up his sleeves and looked at the bandage on his left arm. "A nasty scratch, it was. I lost a lot of blood. It should heal soon."

The two men had by then sat down on the steps of the archway. They were now talking in whispers. Pratap tried to catch their conversation. He could not make out anything. So they slowly moved away.

"Did you hear what Shankar the guard said?" Pratap looked thoughtful. "He was telling the bearded man *not to worry*. Why should it concern anybody if we had asked to see the palace?"

"I didn't notice it," said Appu. "But now that you say so, there must be something in it. Yes, why this talk of *worry* at all?"

"They must be hiding some secret!" was all that Biju could suggest.

"I noticed something else," said Pratap. "That huge padlock looks as if it is being used every day! So clean and shiny!"

His friends nodded in agreement. They could not, however, guess anything. They spent some more time near the palace. In between Pratap would tiptoe to the corner to see if anything was happening. No, the two men were still seated on the steps. Meanwhile, they saw the Headmaster, Vinita's uncle, Mr. Rajasekhar, and the



policemen going into the garden.

"It's lunch time," said Appu. "Let's go and eat something."

They went to the tea-shop near the palace. It was deserted. The owner was dozing in his seat resting his head on the money-box. Their voices woke him up. Appu ordered 'vada' and coffee for all three. The shop owner went inside and came back with hot coffee and a plate of vadas.

"Where are you all from?" he asked, as he poured coffee into three cups. "Aren't there any elders with you? Did you come alone? Didn't you hear, a girl was kidnapped from here yesterday?"

"Yes, someone was just telling us about that," said Pratap, before the others could speak. "How did it happen? Were there many strangers here yesterday?"

"No strangers. She was one of a party of school children who came in a bus. She had mysteriously disappeared by the time they were ready to go back. In fact, yesterday, no one else came to the palace. Only this group and, of course, Anand."

"Who's Anand?" asked Appu.

"He seems to be a friend of one of the guards. He is seen here regularly. Sometimes he would disappear for days together. When he comes back, he stays around for some time. Where he goes away, nobody knows."

The boys got up and paid their bill.

"See there!" said the shop owner. "The policemen who came to investigate are going back."

They looked out and saw the policemen and the four others walking towards the bus stop.

"So the investigation is over," commented Appu sarcastically.

The boys then made their way to the garden. They went to every little spot and surveyed every inch of the ground with great care looking for some clue that might lead them to Vinita wherever she was. But they drew a blank.

The boys then decided to go back. There was a thick, thorny shrubbery through which they had to pass to reach the palace. Pratap, who was walking in front, suddenly stopped in the middle of the bushes. He bent down and picked up something.

"Look at this," he said and showed the others something he had picked up.

"A handkerchief! There's blood on it!" said Appu, aghast at the sight.

Someone apparently had crumpled it into a ball and thrown it away. Pratap tried to straighten it. The dried blood made it stick in many places. Pratap was carefully putting it in his trouser pocket when Biju called from behind. "Sit down, quick! And hide yourself." Within seconds all three sat down among the bushes and hid themselves.

"Look at that door we noticed in the  
(Turn to page 51)



**W**HALES are really not fishes; because of their long, streamlined body and fin-like forelimbs and tail they look like fishes. The whales were therefore, considered big fishes. It is only in the last 300 years or so that naturalists have discovered that the whale is not a fish but a mammal. A majority of mammals live on dry land. The whale is the biggest of all creatures the present world has ever seen! Among them the Blue Whale is the biggest. It grows to about 85 metres in length and weighs about 300 tons. That will be about the size of 30 African bull elephants! Can you imagine?

Perhaps the whales were at first land animals. Searching for food they might have reached the ocean and since continued to live in water. Gradually, they must have adopted themselves to a life in the sea. And, finally, they attained the shape of a fish. Its forelimbs grew smaller and became flippers, like the fins of a fish. Its tail is not like that of a fish. It is flat and horizontal up to the water level. Some whales have a fin on the dorsal side, too.

Unlike a fish, the whale has to come to the surface to breathe fresh air. It can continue to stay under water at a stretch for about an hour.

By studying whale skeletons, it has

been surmised that the fins are the forelimbs. The structure of the bones of the forelimbs is the same as that of other mammals. These are buried under the flesh. That is why there is no evidence of it outside. In some whales the smaller hind limbs are seen embedded in the body. They are the remnants of the forelimbs. These changes must have taken place through thousands of centuries.

Another characteristic of mammals is the growth of hair on their bodies. Hair is essential to keep the warm blood at the correct temperature. However, except for the two or three bristles seen near the mouth, the whale is hairless. Mammals are warm-blooded animals. As whales live in water, to keep up a constant body temperature, they have a thick coating of fat on their body, known as "blubber".

The whale breathes through its nostrils, which are on the uppermost part of its head. Used hot air is let out through this hole in a great gust. It condenses into a spout. The whale is well known for this spouting, which is the way it breathes and nothing else. Occasionally, it comes to the surface when the hot air is let out into the atmosphere.

Whales can be divided into two main groups the toothed whales and the

whale-bone whales. The Sperm Whale is an example of toothed whales. There are no teeth in the upper jaw of the sperm whale. But the lower jaw is well armed with 20 to 22 pairs of strong teeth. They feed on giant monster-like squids and cuttlefishes. The Killer Whales are also toothed whales. They feed mainly on big fishes, seals, and even large whales.

The whale-bone whales do not possess any typical teeth. They have a long horny plate around the upper jaw. This is the baleen or whale bone. Each plate of whale bone is frayed out along its inner side. In structure, it is like a comb.

With such teeth, the whale cannot prey on any powerful animal. It cannot chew. So, it opens its wide mouth and takes in a large gulp of water containing all sorts of animals. It then closes its mouth and raises its tongue. Water goes out through the whale bone sieve. It then swallows all the animals left inside! The Blue Whale is one of the whale-bone whales. (See diagram)

Whales can be seen all over the ocean. But the toothed whales are found only in the central part of the ocean. The whale-bone whales are confined to

the cold Arctic and Antarctic oceans and the coastal waters where plankton is aplenty.

Whales are generally found stranded along the British Isles. Very strangely, nearly a hundred and fifty whales had been stranded on the Tamilnadu coast in India during the last five years. This has attracted worldwide interest.

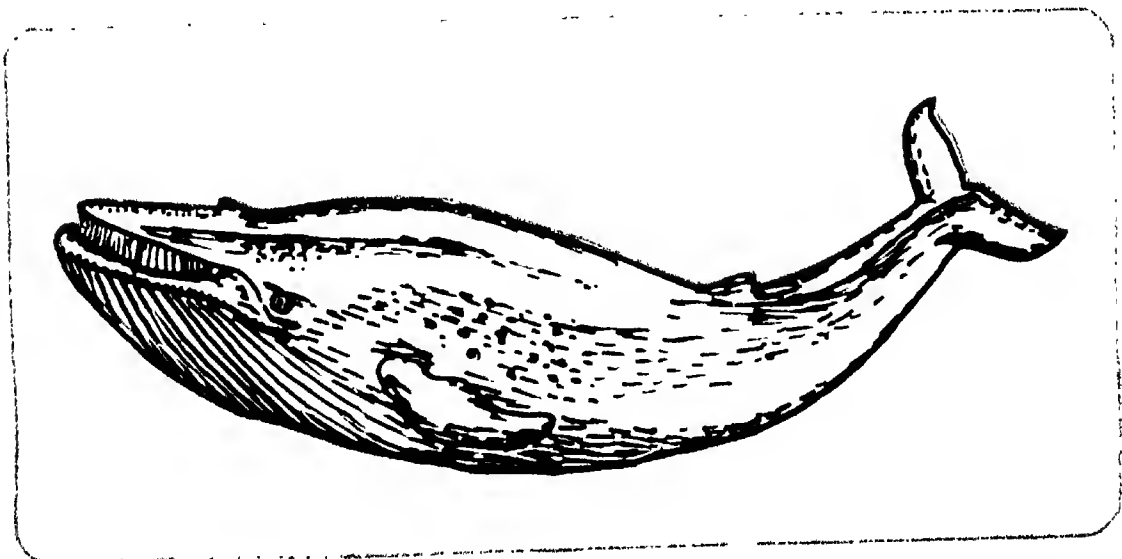
Whales are capable of 'echo location', like dolphins.

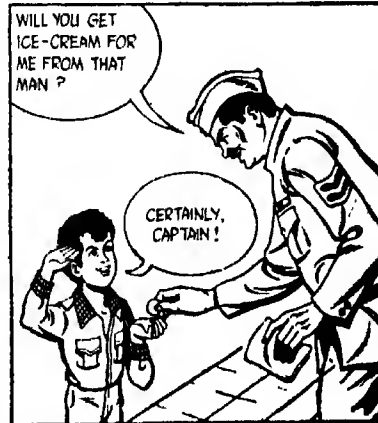
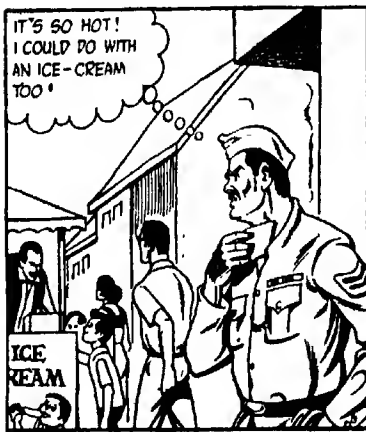
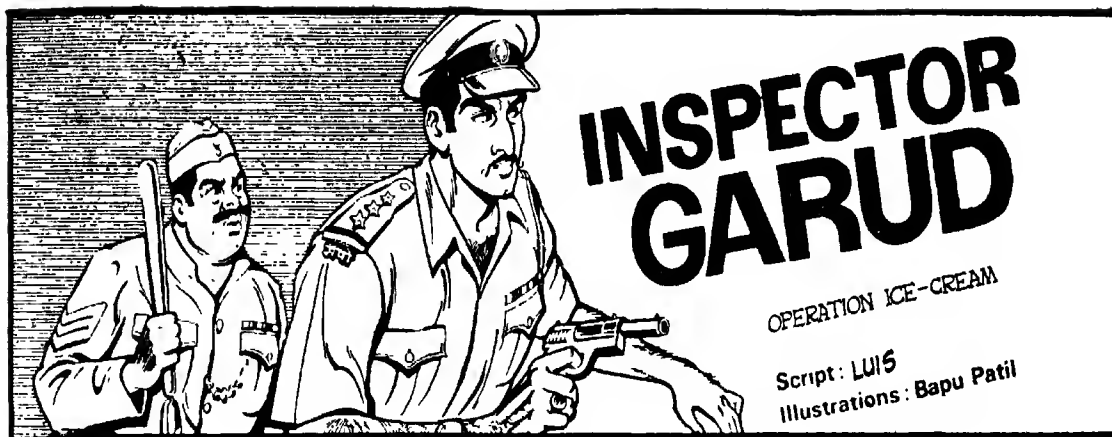
Whale hunting was popular even in the stoneage. The first whaling industry was founded in France. Later on, people in other countries also started whaling. India is yet to make a beginning.

Among the whale products in use, oil is the chief item. Whale oil is used in the manufacture of soaps and candles. Pure spermaceti, which is a wax, is used in the manufacture of cosmetics and face creams. Ambergris, obtained from the intestine of the sperm whale, is used in making perfumes. Whale bone, meat, hide, and ivory are other products. Frozen adrenal glands and pancreas are used in the pharmaceutical industry.

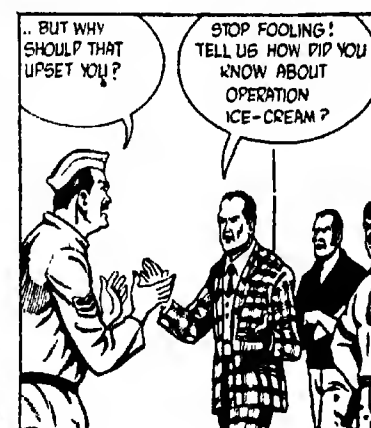
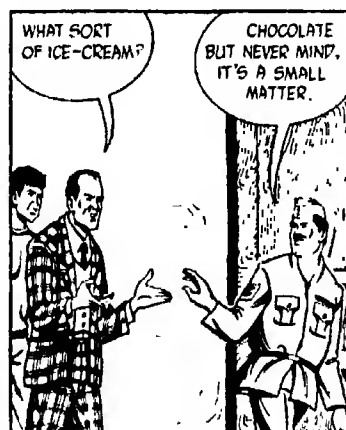
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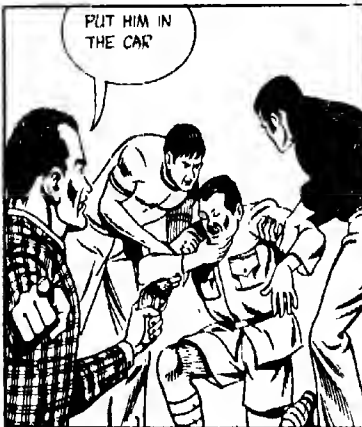
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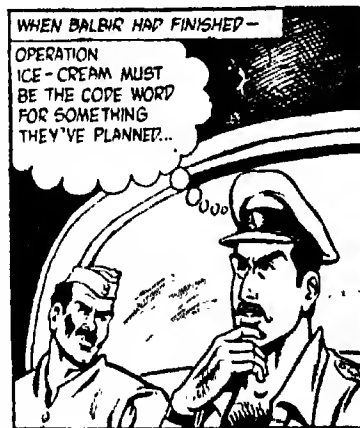


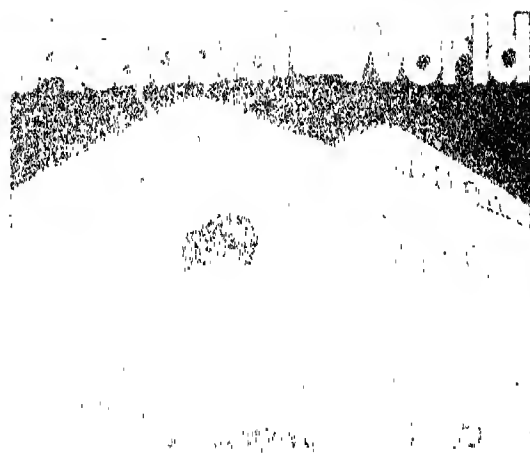
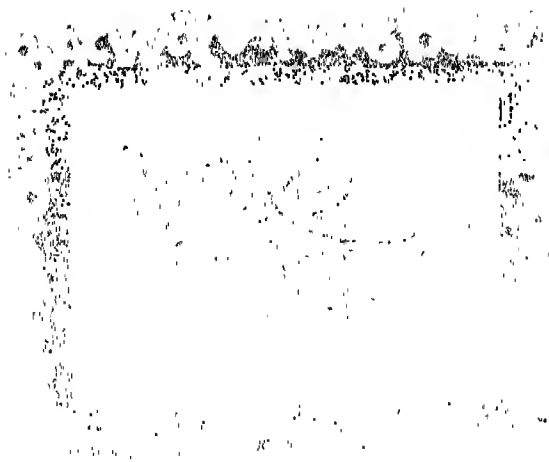












**Y**OU are a Scholar. You must have leisure for reading and thinking. So do not be amazed to hear that the word 'Scholar' is from Greek 'Schole', which means 'leisure'. Classes held by Aristotle and Plato in olden days were called 'Schole'. This passed in Latin as 'Schola', and so gave us the word 'School'.

You are a 'pupil' belonging to a school. This is because, in the class, you look like a little doll! 'Pupil' comes from Latin "Pupilla" meaning 'a little doll'. When you look another person in the eye, you see a very small image of yourself reflected there. So, the Latin 'pupilla' gives you another word 'pupil' with a second meaning, the apple of the eye.

Your 'academy' is from 'academea', the name of a grove named after a far-

mer, Akademos, who is said to have given some hint to the searchers about a Spartan girl kidnapped by Theseus. It was in this grove that Plato and his followers held their classes. Plato never verified the story of the farmer, but he gave us the word 'academy', to mean a place for learning. Thus a farmer's grove ultimately meant a place of learning.

Your College means 'chosen together'. It is from Latin 'Collegium', from Col (with) and lego (choose). College thus means a place where one is chosen along with others.

Your 'seminary' is from Latin 'Seminarium', meaning a seed-plot. Seminaries, thus, originally meant nurseries, where seeds of knowledge are sown and cultivated.

Jyotibhusan Chaki





**T**WO hundred years ago, on a cold November morning, a huge crowd gathered on the grounds of a chateau in Paris, waiting expectantly to see one of the most exciting events of their lives. As they watched, a huge decorated paper balloon rose in the air, with two men in a basket tied to it. The two men, Pilatre de Rozier and the Marquis d'Arlandes, thus became the first men to achieve free flight. Man's age-old dream of flying had been accomplished.

The hot-air balloon used for this fascinating event was made by the Montgolfier brothers. For almost a year the two brothers, Joseph and Jacques, had been carrying out various experiments with paper balloons. It was by sheer accident that they discovered that balloons could be used for aerial voyages.

One evening in 1782, so the story goes, Joseph Montgolfier sat by the fire idly playing with a piece of silk. Shap-

ing it into an open-mouthed bag, he let it fill with hot air and smoke from the fireplace. Suddenly the bag slipped from his hands and rose in the air. As Joseph watched this, an idea struck him. If a silk bag could rise in the air when filled with hot air, he thought, so could a bigger vessel. Along with Jacques, he began a series of experiments using paper bags filled with hot air. The success of these experiments encouraged the brothers to try out a demonstration in the marketplace of their hometown, Annonay, in France. A bonfire was lit in the marketplace and was to be the source of hot air. As the paper balloon filled with hot air, it was released. A crowd of thrilled spectators looked on as the balloon rose above a thousand feet and sailed along for about a mile before coming down again.

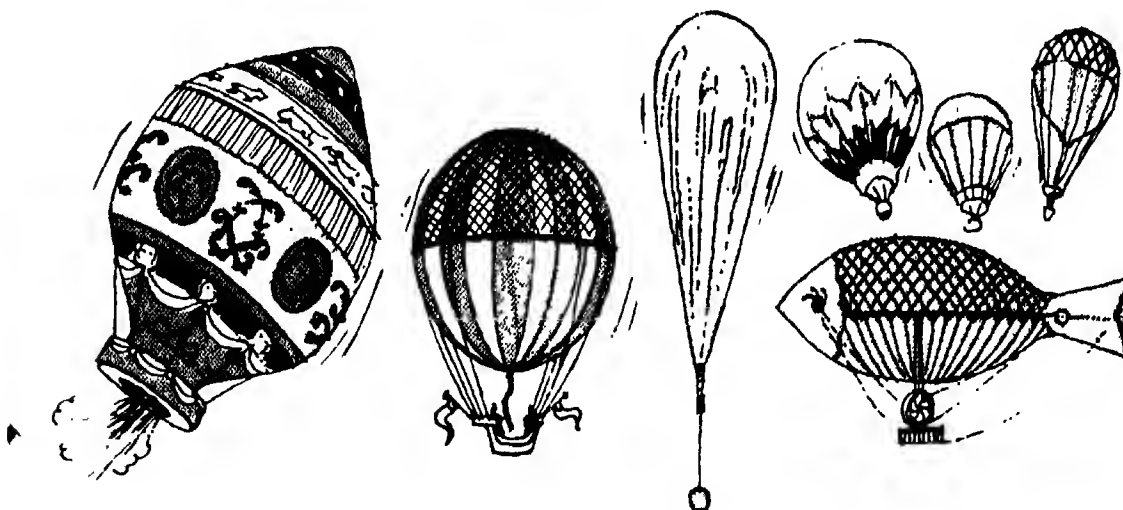
News, even in those days, travelled fast. It was not long before King Louis XVI heard of the Montgolfier experiments. He invited the brothers to Versailles for a demonstration.

The Montgolfier brothers travelled to Versailles with a new idea in mind. They wanted to find out if animal life

could survive an aerial voyage. A large crowd on the grounds of the Versailles palace watched, as the brothers tied a basket to a gaily decorated balloon. Then they placed a sheep, a fowl, and a duck in the basket. The balloon when released rose several hundred feet in the air and sailed over the grounds of the Palace to land safely more than a mile away.

The Montgolfier brothers now decided to try a more ambitious experiment. They started designing a man-carrying balloon. But who would volunteer to be a passenger in this risky venture? the brothers wondered. King Louis XVI came to their help. He offered two convicts as passengers. But almost at the same time, an adventurous young doctor, Pilatre de Rozier, heard about the Montgolfier plans and volunteered to be a passenger. Soon, the venture had another volunteer, Francois Laurent, Marquis d'Arlandes, who was an infantry officer.

The Montgolfier balloon with these two men went up on November 21, 1783. For about twenty-five minutes, the balloon stayed aloft. The only source of lift was a furnace at the



mouth of the balloon. As the two men stoked the furnace to keep the balloon going, the fabric of the balloon caught fire. But all preparations had been made in advance against such emergencies. With wet sponges, the fire was put out and the balloon sailed along without danger over five miles.

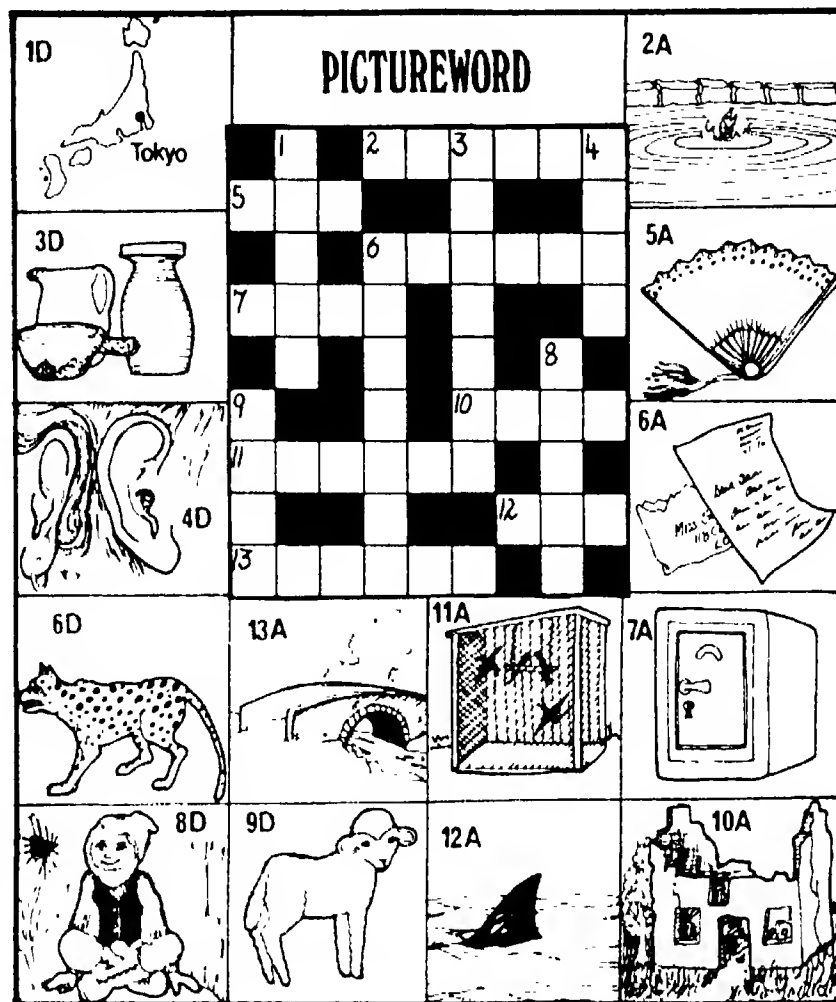
Huge crowds witnessed this historic event. Among them was Benjamin Franklin, who was then the American ambassador to France.

In the years that followed, the Mont-

golfier balloon was used for weather forecasting and earth-mapping, too. Today, it is used by ballooning enthusiasts mostly for pleasure.

The Montgolfier experiment is a significant milestone in aviation history. This year, the bicentenary of the first manned free flight will be celebrated in many countries. In France, where the first flight took place, plans are on to set up a museum of balloons and airships at Chalais-Mendon.

Radhika



(FIRST FEATURES)

(Solution next month)

# MUFFY TO MANGOES

*"I love my Muffy.  
He is not a dog.  
Nor is he a cat.  
Muffy is my favourite doll."*

Doesn't that ring a bell? Not so long ago (but it seems like ages!), when we had just begun to speak, and understand and explain, and ask questions, and demand attention and generally be a pest, hadn't we too lisped to friends, foes, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, or to anybody who'd listen — something like the lines quoted above? "It's not a dog, nor a cat, nor black nor white." . . . . And when the tired listener gave up, we'd yell in delight as we thrust our precious doll in their faces, that it was this — this precious doll that we were talking about. That is why CBT's latest picture-book by Alaka Shankar holds so much appeal for kids. Girls, especially between the ages of 6 and 12 seem to think it's *their* story written just the way it happens with them and their dolls. The little girl in 'My Muffy' bathes her Muffy, puts him to sleep, and takes him to the market. She also lets him join in the party she throws for her friends and dolls.



They drink orange juice and eat biscuits. It is when they are playing ring-a-ring-o'-roses that a big stray dog picks Muffy up and runs away with him. He is chased by the little girl and her friends, but the dog runs faster. A car gives chase and the driver succeeds in catching the naughty dog and rescuing Muffy.

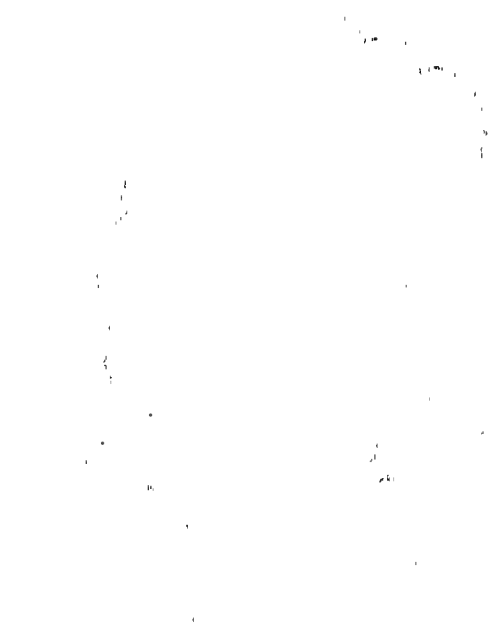
If after reading this, your baby sisters pester your parents to go to CBT to buy this well-illustrated book, you'd be well advised to go along with them and make your parents to buy *you* the other two latest books by CBT.

These two books, 'Short Stories for Children' and 'King of Fruits', are like a glass of "ganna juice" (sugarcane juice, molasses) for a Delhi summer parched throat.

The collection of short stories contributed by the participants of a Writers Workshop are a mixed bag. In here, you'll meet a brave girl who, by her foresight, helps rescue a man tossed off a ship in a storm. On a hot summer afternoon enjoy the escapades of a group of boys playing 'gulli-danda' or stealing guavas from an orchard. There's an adorable monkey who prefers lemonade and his vet to anything or anybody else, and a parrot who picks out fortune cards. There's the long-haired boy who asks to be shaven clean and gets punished for it. A hilarious Hanuman who forgets his (her?) lines on the stage, and the greedy little boy who cleverly adjusts good manners to suit *his* convenience. Need I say more?

And if, while reading these very enjoyable sweet-and-sour stories you feel like having something "Khatta-meetha", I wouldn't spoil my mother's afternoon nap for it. I'd just pick up CBT's 'King of Fruits',





read it from cover to cover, and then make a beeline for the fridge. In a jiffy — by reading the delectable (mouth-watering! I tell you kids) things written about mangoes, ripe and raw, and the easy, yet delicious drinks and eats that could be prepared, I'd prepare and then have a feast — of reading and eating. I'd suggest you have some (of the mangoes, not the stories!) for your Mum to taste, and when she exclaims in delight and marvels at your abilities, show her the book! She'd never ever stop you from eating 'am-papad' again. In fact, she'd even make it for you every year! So here's wishing you happy holidays filled with happy reading and happy eating.

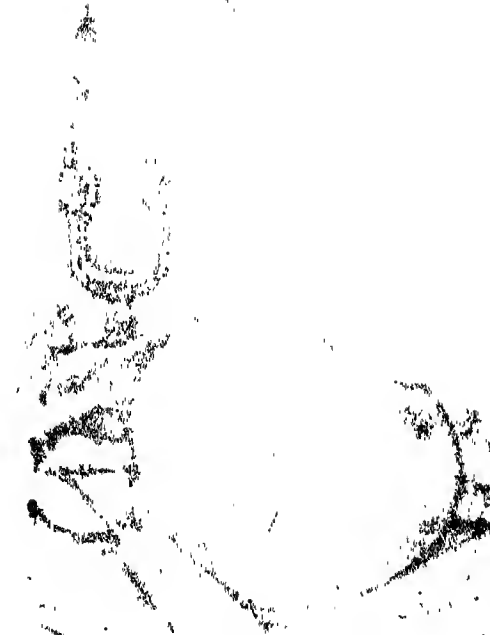
Vaijayanti Tonpe

### **CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN INDIAN LANGUAGES**

**Ed. by Dr. K.A. Jamuna**

**Publications Division, New Delhi**

**Rs 18**



**M**OST of us can remember being told, as little children, stories of animals and fairies, of brave men and women. Children over generations have been told these stories taken mostly from folklore and the ancient Indian classics, like the Mahabharata. Until about the 18th century, there were no story-books for children; nor did they have any text-books. For, the oral tradition was followed in education, too. When the western system of education was introduced, text-books came to be written. From here, it was only a short step to writing story-books for children. The concept of a distinct literature for children was born. From this beginning, the growth and development of children's literature in various Indian languages is traced in the book under review.

The first children's books were based on stories from the Panchatantra, Mahabharata, Ramayana, and the regional folklore. In a few

cases, they were also translations of western classics, like Aesop's Fables. It is much later that independent stories, poems, dramas, and essays began to be written. As even a quick glance through the book under review will reveal, much more has been written for children in certain genres, like short story and poetry, than in others like drama or essay. This is perhaps because a story or a poem can catch a child's attention and interest more easily than a drama or an essay.

Also, one finds from the book that the growth of children's literature of all kinds—stories, biographies, travelogues, poems, and the like—has been rapid in certain languages, like Tamil, Malayalam, Gujarati, Hindi, Marathi, and Bengali. Perhaps Malayalam is the only language where books on political philosophies and philosophical system have been written for children. Other languages like Oriya, Sindhi, and Kashmiri have stuck to more traditional genres, like stories and poems. Development of children's literature in these languages has been rather slow.

Writing for children got a big boost during the International Year of the Child. Several ventures begun then have added greatly to children in various Indian languages than ever before. Many publishing houses in different parts of the country actively encourage writing for children.

While a great deal is being written for children today, the price of well-produced and good quality books remains high, as anyone who has bought books for children knows. The general feeling echoed by several writers in this volume is that the Government can play an important role in bringing cheap books, yet of good quality within the reach of a larger group of children, both by helping in the production of books and in their distribution by setting up mobile libraries or adding to the existing institutional libraries. These are some of the few suggestions made in this book. Another

suggestion made is that more and more children should be encouraged to write.

For the most part, this book is an attempt to summarise the history of children's literature in Indian languages. In this attempt—perhaps a pioneer one—the book succeeds. The reader gets a fairly good idea of the growth of children's literature in the different languages. However, the editing leaves much to be desired. There are several mistakes which a keen editor would not have missed. Despite these, the book will be a good addition to libraries and particularly helpful to those who are interested in studying children's literature in this country.

Radhika

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### “Oh! I'm not sick!”

*I like to be ill:*

*Mum and Dad fuss over me,*

*They let me sit near the window sill,*

*And then take me to the dispensary,*

*Where the doctor says,*

*“Oh, is she sick?”*

*And 'tis the usual trick*

*To make a sick face,*

*But, when I hear the doc say,*

*“She has to have a prick,”*

*I jump and run away,*

*And shout, “Oh! I'm not SICK!”*

Radhika Ramamurthi (9)

# How to Select a Horse

**H**OW does one select a horse? I am sure you would have heard the saying: "Don't look a gift-horse in the mouth." Well, it's not only the mouth that has to be inspected in a horse. In the case of a doll or a story-book, there is little doubt that it should meet your requirements. But one horse may be totally suitable for you, and not at all for your friend or next door neighbour!

Two important points have to be kept in mind when you select a horse for yourself. First, the ability of the rider: whether you are a novice or an experienced rider. Secondly, the purpose for which the horse is required. This is because you need a different type of horse—for eventing, show-jumping, racing, or gymkhana.

Many a child may wish he could ride a dashing thorough-bred. This may not be feasible, as it will be a super-horse—beautiful, highly strung, and full of impetuous courage.

A half-bred pony is generally recommended for children. It should be remembered that a young, inexperienced pony is not suitable for a child, who may, like the animal, be nervous and inexperienced.

The shape and general proportions of the horse indicate its potential performance. One should go for the best physical specimen that one can afford.

Performance will also influence the price. A proven show jumper or a well

experienced gymkhana pony will obviously be priced more than an untried animal.

Having decided what type of a horse to select, how does one go about it? The first golden rule is to inspect the potential animal **in its stable**. You have to observe carefully its reactions to handling and its general mannerisms—whether it is friendly and comes out with a greeting, or if it is unsure and jumpy.

Once you are inside the stable, pick up all the hooves and check whether the animal will be easy to shoe. Take the horse outside the stable and take a good look at it. Generally, a horse with a broader forehead tends to have a more even temper. You must also see whether the horse's body and limbs are in proportion.

If you take along an expert, he will check out points like bone measurement, which tells you how much weight a horse can carry.

Let the groom run out the horse at a walk and trot. Note the action—it should be straight and economical. The horse should not waste its energy unnecessarily.

The horse should be saddled next—by the owner. Be alert. The horse should go better for his owner than for anybody else. Let the owner give you a demonstration. Observe the horse's willingness to respond to the aids given by the rider.

Next you can try out the horse for yourself. Begin with a trot and slowly canter. Generally get the feel of the horse and take it over a small fence. Be honest with yourself, and decide whether the horse suits you well.

If you like the horse, subject it to a thorough examination by a qualified vet. This will be a verification of the horse's health. The temperament and behaviour of the horse—there can be no better judge than you. And, finally, find out the diet it is used to, so that it can quickly settle down in its new home.

As you take the animal home, remember the horseman's saying: "To his virtues be ever kind, to his faults a little blind."

Sumitra Senapati

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THE POINTS OF A HORSE: 1. Ear 2. Forelock 3. Nostril 4. Muzzle 5. Shoulder 6. Crest of neck 7. Withers 8. Back 9. Loins 10. Point of Hip 11. Thigh 12. Buttocks 13. Stifle 14. Hock 15. Shank 16. Fetlock 17. Belly 18. Ribs 19. Upper arm 20. Elbow 21. Chest 22. Forearm 23. Knee 24. Tendons 25. Hoof





**Our Story:** TORCHES FLUTTER AND SHADOWS DANCE AS THE MOB DESCENDS UPON A LONELY FARMHOUSE. ARN IS AMONG THEM. THEY HAVE FOUND THE CHILD JUSTINIAN SEEKING -- ALETA'S CHILD, ARN'S BROTHER. NOW THEY NEED ONLY HAND HIM OVER AND THEIR OWN CHILDREN WILL BE SAFE. WHAT IS ONE LIFE AGAINST HUNDREDS?



A DOOR SQUEALS IN THE DISTANCE, THEN SLAMS SHUT IN THE WIND. "THERE THEY GO," SOMEONE CRIES.



MOTHER AND FATHER FLEE WITH THEIR ADOPTED SON. THE MOB SPREADS OUT IN PURSUIT. BUT ARN REMAINS CALM. IN THIS WEATHER HE SUSPECTS THE FAMILY IS HIDING, NOT FLEEING. HE EXAMINES THE EARTH, THE BRUSH, THE PATCHES OF SNOW.



SOON HE PICKS UP THE TRAIL, AS DAWN YAWNS OVER THE MOUNTAINS, ARN SPIES THE WELL-HIDDEN ENTRANCE TO A SHALLOW CAVE. HE SEES NO ONE, BUT IN THE BITTER COLD MAKES OUT THE VAPOR OF ESCAPING BREATH.



NOT ONLY BREATH ESCAPES. SUDDENLY AN INFANT'S WAIL DISTURBS THE CHILL RUSTLE OF A WINTER MORN.



IT ECHOES OFF THE HILLSIDES AND FILLS THE VALLEY. AND SOON ARN HAS COMPANIONS AT THE MOUTH OF THE CAVE. "THEY WILL NOT GET AWAY NOW," SAYS ONE. THE CROWD PRESSES FORWARD TO FIND PRINCE ARN BLOCKING THE WAY.



ARN SHIELDS THE CHILD SOUGHT BY JUSTINIAN--THE ABDUCTED BROTHER HE HAS HEARD BUT NOT YET SEEN. THE CROWD CLAMORS FOR THE BOY. THERE ARE TOO MANY OF THEM, AND ARN WILL NOT DRAW HIS SWORD ON UNARMED, FRIGHTENED PEOPLE. HE TOPPLES.



"LET THE CHILD BE." THE COMMAND THUNDERS FORTH AND THE THRONG YIELDS TO THE VOICE OF THE RABBI EZEKIEL. "WHERE IS IT WRITTEN THAT YOU SHOULD PUT YOUR FAITH IN JUSTINIAN'S WORD RATHER THAN THE LAW OF OUR FATHERS?" AND WITH ARN HE ENTERS THE CAVE.



"OOOOOOO!" CRIES THE BOY IN DELIGHT, FOR PRINCE ARN'S IS THE FIRST RED HAIR HE HAS EVER SEEN, NEVER HAVING SEEN HIS OWN. "NOW HUSH, NATHAN," SAYS THE KINDLY WOMAN. WITH HER HUSBAND SHE HAS RAISED A HEALTHY, HAPPY CHILD. ARN KNOWS IN HIS HEART THAT THIS IS TRULY HIS BROTHER. BUT BY WHAT RIGHT CAN ALETA DEMAND TO BE CALLED "MOTHER"? AND WHAT RIGHT HAS HE TO TAKE THE CHILD AWAY? ARN LEAVES THE CAVE WITHOUT EXPLAINING WHY HE HAS COME. THE HARDEST PART OF HIS QUEST HAS BEGUN.

OUTSIDE THE RABBI CALMS HIS TERRIFIED PEOPLE. WHERE WILL THANATOPS AND HIS MARAUDERS STRIKE NEXT? WHAT VILLAGE WILL NOW HAVE ITS INFANTS SLAUGHTERED? "PUT YOUR TRUST IN THE LORD," HE COUNSELS THEM. SECONDS LATER, THANATOPS AND HIS MEN CRASH THROUGH THE TREES.

ARN HAS AT LAST SET EYES  
UPON HIS INFANT BROTHER, NATHAN, AS  
HE IS CALLED BY THE CHILDLESS COUPLE  
WHO HAVE RAISED HIM SINCE BIRTH. SENT  
BY JUSTINIAN, THANATOPS TOO SEEKS THE BOY.



AMONG THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL HE  
HAS SPREAD TERROR, DEMANDING  
THAT THE CHILD BE GIVEN UP TO  
HIM. HE HAS WATCHED AND WAITED.  
NOW THE WOLF POUNCES ON THE  
SHEEP. THE FLOCK SCATTERS IN PANIC.



WITH EZEKIEL, ARN SHEPHERDS NATHAN AND HIS  
"PARENTS" UP THE SLOPE. THANATOPS HAS  
CHOSEN HIS GROUND POORLY: IN ROUGH TERRAIN,  
ARMORED SOLDIERS ON HORSEBACK CANNOT  
KEEP UP WITH NIMBLE MEN ON FOOT. BUT THEY  
ARE FAST ENOUGH FOR AN OLD RABBI.



ARN LOOKS BACK IN HORROR. DRAWING STRENGTH  
FROM RAGE HE SENDS ONE BOULDER AND THEN  
ANOTHER AFTER THE ATTACKER. TOO LATE THE  
HORSEMAN SWERVES. THE BLOODIED STONES  
CONTINUE DOWNHILL, KICKING OTHERS INTO  
MOTION. ARN'S AVALANCHE BUYS TIME.



EZEKIEL IS MORTALLY WOUNDED.  
"MY BOOK," HE GASPS. "YOU MUST  
GIVE IT TO THE RABBIS AT BABYLON.  
NOW LEAVE ME."

2394



AS THE MOUNTAINSIDE CALMS, THANATOPS AND HIS MEN RESUME THE  
CHASE, FLUSHING THE JUDEANS LIKE GAME, DRIVING THEM UP TO THE CREST  
THEN DOWN INTO OPEN VALLEY. NOW THERE IS NO PROTECTION. NOT FAR  
AWAY A DYING RABBI WHISPERS A PSALM WITH HIS LAST BREATH: "HEARKEN  
UNTO MY WORDS, FOR HAUGHTY MEN HAVE RISEN AGAINST ME, AND FIERCE  
MEN SEEK MY LIFE."

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12-26

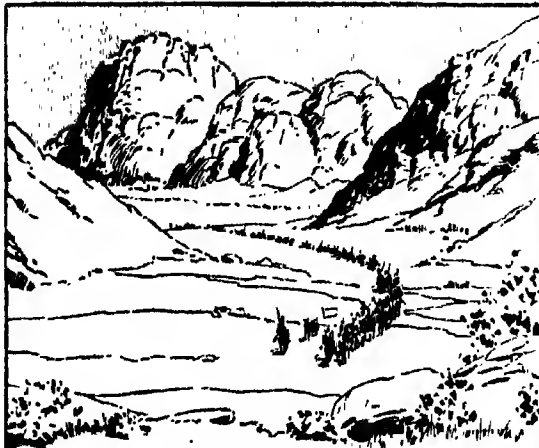




THANATOPS HAS DRIVEN HIS QUARRY OUT OF THE HILLS AND INTO THE TALL GRASS OF THE VALLEY BOTTOM. HIS MEN READY FOR THE KILL. SUDDENLY ARN PRICKS HIS EARS. IN HIS KNEES HE FEELS THE RUMBLING EARTH. FROM THE EAST SWARMS AN ARMY OF PERSIANS, LIKE LOCUSTS THEY FALL UPON THE EMPEROR'S MEN.



CRUELTY IS OFTEN A MASK WORN BY COWARDICE. THANATOPS TURNS TO FLEE. THE PERSIANS HELP HIM SHED BOTH THE MASK AND THE HEAD BEHIND IT.



SOON THE VALLEY IS QUIET AGAIN. THE PERSIANS CONTINUE WESTWARDS, LED BY THE GREAT KHOSRU, BENT ON CONQUERING THE FRONTIER OF JUSTINIAN'S EMPIRE. THE CHRONICLES WILL REPORT THAT HE SUCCEEDS, AND THAT THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL PROSPER UNDER HIS RULE.



BEFORE SUNDOWN THE JUDEANS FINISH BURYING THE DEAD, EVEN THANATOPS AND HIS SOLDIERS. BUT RESPECT DEMANDS THAT THE RABBI BE BURIED FIRST. AFTER THE PSALMS HAVE BEEN RECITED, EZEKIEL IS INTERRED WEARING HIS BLOOD-SOAKED GARMENTS, COVERED BY A WHITE SHROUD.



JOHN CULLEN MURPHY

IT IS THE LAST DAY OF THE FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS, COMMEMORATING THE DELIVERANCE OF THE ISRAELITES FROM ANOTHER ENEMY CENTURIES BEFORE. NOW KHOSRU HAS STAYED THE HAND OF JUSTINIAN. ARN OBSERVES THE RITUAL WITH THE MAN AND WIFE WHO HAVE RAISED ALETA'S CHILD AS THEIR OWN. HE LEARNS THAT THEIR NAMES ARE MATTHIAS AND JUDITH.



AND HE WONDERS HOW TO TELL THEM THAT HE IS NATHAN'S BROTHER, THAT HE HAS COME TO TAKE THE BOY AWAY.

(TO BE CONTINUED...)



# Grand Aunt's Emerald Ring

I CLIMBED the stairs two at a time and hurried towards my grand uncle's room.

Packed in three cars, we had arrived the previous night at my father's ancestral home in Neelhati village. By "we", I mean our family of four, my two uncles and their families, Shaniblu a family friend, and Pushpa our ayah.

"Welcome, my dears!" Grand uncle had exclaimed, as we trooped in. "Let in a breath of fresh air into this lonely old shell."

He was evidently referring to his solitary existence in the house. He had only Budhan, his old retainer, with him there. But it was the very antiquity and seclusion of this grand old mansion that had made it all the more charming to us.

That night itself, Grand uncle had declared his wish to present us, cousins, some jewellery that had belonged to his wife, our late grand aunt. "Nothing valuable, just trifling bits of silver and beads," he had explained to my mother and aunts. To us he said, "Come to my room, first thing tomorrow, and take your mementoes!"

So there I was, rushing to his room the next morning.

As I breathlessly charged into the room, I found my other cousins already seated around him. Everyone's eyes were glued to the exquisite array of

rings, bangles, necklaces, brooches, hair clips, and earrings that lay strewn on a table. Grand uncle was busy identifying each piece, telling us where it had been made, and describing the delicacy of the engravings and craftsmanship.

I had almost selected what I wanted, when I suddenly spotted a gold ring set with a square green gem. "Dadu, may I have this one, too?" I begged of Grand uncle.

Gyan, my college-going cousin, also seemed to have laid his eyes on the ring the same moment. He slapped his palm over the ring. "No, Beenu," he said, "this square stone suits a man. Be a sport, let me have it."

He pointed to me another ring with a round purplish stone. "It's an amethyst — a smashing antique piece!" he cajoled in a voice any good salesman would have envied.

"Ugh! I hate purple," I retorted, refusing to melt. "Thanks, Gyan, but I'll have this green one."

Before an argument could break out between the two of us, Grand uncle pronounced, "Gyan, remember ladies first. Let her have what she wants."

That clinched the issue. The green ring became mine.

Gyan muttered something and went off in a huff. I pretended not to have heard him and gloated over my acquisition.

"Emerald looks very pretty on me," I boasted to Pinku, my younger cousin.

Then, it began — at the breakfast table. Without any provocation, Bonny, my kid sister, and Hira and Manik, my twin cousins, started teasing me. Naturally, I asserted my authority and let a few smacks fly. Bonny at once started yelling for Mummy.

As usual, mother did not bother to go into the details. She straightway reprimanded me. I'm afraid my replies were not too polite!

It was altogether a bad day! Papa entered the room just then. A thunder cloud had descended on his brow. In a most grim voice he said, "Beenu, your behaviour is shocking! I'm thoroughly ashamed of you."

His words stung me like fire. Papa had not rebuked me for ages! The last time he had lost his temper with me

was when I got a bare pass mark in Maths, in Class III. Now he was ticking me off before the youngsters!

I managed to swallow the lump in my throat and fought back my tears. My breakfast was ruined. The piping hot "Puris" could have been a heap of stones for all I cared.

I spent the next half-hour sulking and pretended to ignore Bonny, Hira, and Manik, who ran about giggling. After a while, Mummy suggested we visit her old aunt Saroj. A change of atmosphere was only too welcome, so I ran upstairs to get ready. To my consternation, I just could not find my new 'snede-finish' jeans in my suitcase. "I'm sure I had packed them," I told my mother, who was equally sure that I had forgotten to bring them. Finally, I wore my 'salwaar-kameez'. But the thought of losing my favourite jeans



kept pricking my peace of mind.

After lunch, I went up to the little attic to spend a quiet afternoon, reading.

It was well past four, when Mummy's calls asking me to go down for tea tore me away from my book. I hurriedly jumped up from the rickety arm-chair I was settled in.

The afternoon glare had faded and the room was full of shadows. Suddenly, I noticed a ray of red light pouring in through the only open window of the room, and falling on a corner piled with junk. To my immense surprise a red-robed 'sadhu' sat crosslegged in the corner.

Too petrified to scream, I saw the red glow change to an eerie purple.

Just then, the 'sadhu' opened his bloodshot eyes and stared at me.

I could bear it no longer. "B..h... bhoot...bhoot!" I yelled and bounded towards the stairs.

In my fright, I tripped on the steps and would have fallen headlong, but for the providential appearance of Shambhu, Gyan's friend. He quickly grasped my arm and steadied me.

My screams had by now brought the entire household upstairs. Through incoherent jabbering, I managed to describe the ghost I had just seen.

Of course, no one believed me! "Oh! Come on, Beenu," joked my youngest uncle, "it's daytime still; the bhoots are fast asleep!"

Gyan and Shambhu, too, scoffed



at what they called my "overfertile imagination".

I was puzzled. True, there was no trace of the ghost in the attic now. But how could I forget the sight of that frightful 'sadhu'?

I soon realised how more harm had been done than my merely being haunted by a spirit from the nether world. I had hurt my ankle rather badly, so even when I took a step or two, shooting pains immobilised my leg.

As a result, when all my cousins went for a walk by the riverside, I had to stay back, my ankle smeared with liniment, and my foot propped up on a stool.

I spent a boring evening.

Adding insult to injury, Bonny, Hira and Manik insisted on describing all the fun they had, in the minutest detail. "We had a marvellous picnic by the river. You missed something great, Didi," said Bonny pityingly.

I flung a well-aimed cushion at her to stop her irritating commentary. The heartless creature seemed to be enjoying my misery!

Next morning my foot was better, but I still needed rest. So, Pinku, Gyan, Shambhu, and I sat down to play cards.

Our conversation drifted to palmistry.

"Shambhu is a good palmist, you know, Beenu," Gyan remarked.

"How come?" I enquired.

"Don't you know? His grandfather was a famous astrologer in Benaras," came the reply.

Though Shambhu readily protested that he was not "that good", Pinku and I insisted that he should read our palms.

Shambhu was very correct in some of the things he said about me. He even predicted for me a good career, with a travel abroad thrown in!

Suddenly, his round face became

serious. "Beenu," he said, "emeralds don't suit you at all. As soon as you wear one, you rush headlong into trouble! Sorrow, disappointments, losses, accidents, terror...."

"That's all, Shambhu," I declared, as an idea struck me. "You're perfectly right!" I was staring at the dull green ring on my finger.

True, emerald was bad for me! Had not my entire day been jinxed yesterday? Everything had gone topsy-turvy, all because of that accursed ring!

I quickly slipped it off my finger and handed it to Gyan. "Please take this ring, Gyan," I said, "we have a return journey by car and I don't want to invite any further trouble."

A weight seemed to have been lifted off my shoulders the minute I got rid of that ring. The rest of that day passed peacefully and happily. After lunch, Gyan and Shambhu left for their hostel.

Later that evening . . .

"Where's your ring, Beenu?" Grand uncle asked me when he saw my naked finger.

I told him about Shambhu's prediction. I had hardly finished speaking when Grand uncle let out a guffaw that nearly choked him. "Dear me, Beenu!" he spluttered. "Those naughty boys have taken you for a ride!"

Laughing, he explained that the green stone was no emerald. "It is an ordinary Tibetan stone. When I was telling them about that ring, you were downstairs, so you missed that part."

I gasped foolishly at him — my mind a total blank.

"As for Shambhu's grandfather being an astrologer! That's a fine cock-and-bull story they spun," continued Grand uncle between chuckles. "He was a professor of History, with no knowledge of

palnistry! I should know, for he was a close friend."

I was almost in tears! To think that I had fallen hook, line, & sinker into their trap! But what about the previous day's strange incidents? Was it all a mere coincidence?

I then noticed Budhan, Grand uncle's aged servant, grinning toothlessly at me. "Gyan Babu did frighten you terribly yesterday afternoon, didn't he?"

"What?" I shrieked, a vague suspicion dawning in my brain. "So that ghost . . . ?"

" . . . was Gyan Babu," Budhan completed the sentence, giving a shape to my doubt.

The story soon came out. Gyan had borrowed a sadhu's costume and wig from Budhan's grandson, who had played a 'sadhu' in the village drama that year. He and Shambhu, using a torch and coloured paper, had then managed to frighten me!

By now Bonny, Hira, and Manik were giggling, too. "Didi, Gyan-da

promised us chocolates if we quarrelled with you. So, the minute you came down for breakfast . . ."

"But, Didi," broke in Bonny, "Gyan-da said he was sorry about Papa scolding you, and about your ankle . . . How was he to know . . . ?" she mumbled uncertainly.

I scowled, needing no further explanation on Gyan's grand conspiracy!

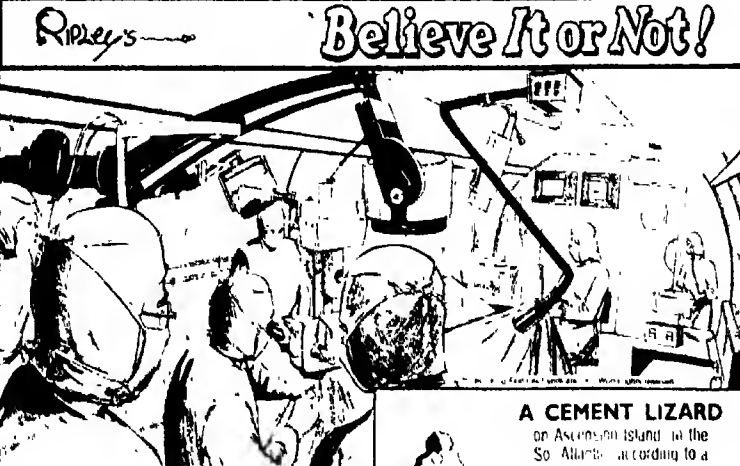
Pushpa, our ayah, too came along, smiling from ear to ear. "Didi," she said, "your 'jeans' . . . Gyan Babu told me to hide . . ."

"Yes I know," I shouted, running towards her with a clenched fist. But she laughed and made good her escape.


Everyone was laughing now. I felt extremely silly. I stamped my foot in a show of temper and hurried upstairs. It was useless fighting with Gyan, for he would tease me all the more. The best policy, I decided, was to keep mum, and avenge the loss of my 'emerald' through some other trick!

S. Banerjee

**Ripley's Believe It or Not!**



**THE LATEST EYE SURGERY TECHNIQUES**  
are being taught to surgeons throughout the world by Haverlin ophthalmologists. David Paton, who lies in there in a D.C. 8 jet, the cabin of which is a **MODERN OPERATING ROOM**



**A CEMENT LIZARD**  
on Ascension Island, in the So. Atlantic, according to a custom started by British Royal Marines long ago is painted a different color by any servicemen transferred from the island — **AND WHO HOPES NEVER TO SEE IT AGAIN**  
Submitted by Robert Mott and Roger Jackson, Ascension Island

**ARABELLA WILLIAMS**  
of Escondido, Calif.  
SLALOMS on one ski in winter weather at the age of 86



**SNOW ON NO MONS**  
(Mons is Latin for mountain) A sentence that reads the same upside down  
Submitted by Frank H. Kahn, Naderville, Ill.

A colourful start....



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# When "Christ" Edited a Newspaper

DR. CHARLES M. SHELDON, a clergyman, was of the staunch opinion that if a big city daily was edited as Christ would have done it, its circulation would rise.

The publisher of "Topeka Capital", a leading newspaper in Kansas, challenged Sheldon to prove his contention. The publisher asked the clergyman, "Well, Dr. Sheldon, if we should tender you the "Capital" to make the experiment, would you take it?"

Dr. Sheldon said, "Do you really mean it?"

"I do," replied the publisher.

With that the great experiment in journalism started.

The editor and staff of the "Capital" resented the move. They thought, no newspaper could be edited as Christ might have edited one and still sell. Also that Sheldon being a green horn, would know nothing of the importance of spicy and sensational news.

Dr. Sheldon contended that a newspaper carrying clean news would be more readable and sell more. He took over the editorship in March 1900, and the entire Fourth Estate watched with curiosity and unconcealed amusement.

Seated in his chair as chief editor, Dr. Sheldon visualized how Christ would have acted in this role. Under Sheldon's editorship, all stories of scandal, vice, and crime were played down, not omitted but reduced to what the clergyman felt was their proper length. All Society page news was reduced to almost nothing. For the first time in newspaper history, virtue and good

became hot news. Editorials were shifted to the front page and every one of them was signed. Dr. Sheldon objected to the editorial "We", and the omission of a by-line on opinion as sheer cowardice. Every front-page news story was followed by balanced editorial comment in footnotes. A famine in India was front-paged, followed by an appeal for help to the destitutes. The Sunday edition of the paper was replaced by a Special Saturday night issue which carried Sermons on the Mount.

Dr. Sheldon permitted neither smoking nor profanity in the newspaper office. The business department strongly opposed Sheldon's ban on advertisements about drinks. Dr. Sheldon also barred ads for theatrical and sporting events. He refused to accept ads from one of the big departmental stores in Kansas city. As a result, the paper lost heavily in revenue.

But something unusual was happening. Just as the wide-eyed staff finally got into the habit of things, so did the public. Readers were pleased by the good taste. The circulation went up from 11,000 odd copies to 362,684 copies daily by the end of five days. The "Topeka" press, unable to handle the increased print order, had to get the extra copies printed at other presses!

When the experiment ended, editor Hudson once again took over the reins. Critics in the newspaper world decided that the paper, edited according to "Christ", had been too sedate. They suggested that the fantastic rise in circulation was merely a fluke resulting from

novelty plus clever publicity!

There were others who felt that Dr. Sheldon had published a new kind of newspaper which had sold because readers enjoyed seeing good news getting the same importance as the bad. For this reason, they bought copies of the "Capital". Dr. Sheldon himself put it like this: "If my paper was dull or stupid or lacking in what newspapermen call 'news', it was at least perfectly clean from Tuesday morning till Saturday night. So far as I could make it, the paper had not one line in it that could not be read aloud in the family circle or at Church prayer meetings."

Dr. Sheldon was satisfied because he lived up to the high standards he had set for himself and shown a miraculous rise in the circulation of the paper. After hitting high, he returned to the pulpit.

I. M. Soni

(Continued from page 24)

morning," whispered Biju. "It's opening."

The door was being opened slowly. The door which had not been opened for more than a decade, according to the guard!

"Let's wait and watch," said Pratap. They kept their eyes glued to the door. It opened a little and Shankar the guard came from inside. He closed and locked the door, before turning round to see whether anyone had seen him. He was satisfied there was no one. The boys waited for another hour but found Shankar sitting idly on the steps. They then got up and walked out of the shrubbery.

"Let's go back, it's getting late," said Pratap. As they walked past Shankar, he smiled at them. "What could be behind that wicked smile?" wondered Pratap.

Radhakrishnan

**Ripley's**  
**"Believe It or Not!"**



**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT**

THE TEMPLE TOWN BAND of Temple, N.H., which first played in public at a memorial service for George Washington on Feb. 22, 1800, was organized and began practicing 183 years ago.

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**THE BEST PLACE TO BUY ARABIANS IS THE U.S.A.**

HRH Prince Saife Eldin of Saudi Arabia bought 5 Arabian horses this year from the Tom Chauncey stables in Scottsdale, Ariz. Last winter 227 Arabians were auctioned in Scottsdale for \$26,600,000.

Submitted by Tom Higgins, Grassville, N.Y.

**WHERE A CUP OF COFFEE IS A MARRIAGE PROPOSAL**



A SUITOR in Lapland, when he first calls on a girl's family to show his intentions, asks: if he may brew their coffee - and if the parents drink it he is considered engaged.



**THE FIVE SHOOTER**

used by Texas Rangers in the 1800s, before invention of the famed six shooter, had a concealed trigger - **WHICH APPEARED ONLY WHEN THE WEAPON WAS COCKED**



# SOME REMARKABLE BIRDS

**Y**OUNG bird-lovers, here are some facts about our winged friends you might not have known before. You may find them interesting.



Children's story-books are full of 'wise' owls. Do you know what human-like quality of owls is mainly responsible for their 'wise' looks? Owls, unlike other birds, have both eyes looking in the same direction, very much like human beings. In addition, some species of owl have dark rings around the eyes, which give them a stern, bespectacled look. In reality, owls are no more intelligent than other birds!



In the islands of New Zealand, where there was neither competition for food nor danger from land mammals, some birds became ground foragers and eventually lost the power of flight. The kiwi is one such bird. Other flightless birds of New Zealand are the takahe, the kakapo, and the pukeko.



In the fierce struggle for existence in Nature, some animals have survived by choosing to search for their food in places where other related species are reluctant to go. The dipper is a bird which has, in this way, managed to 'get away from the crowds' and survive. The dipper gets its food thus: it hunts its food not on land but under water where other birds provide little competition. It literally swims, with wings outstretched, searching for the

larvae of water insects.



The alpine accentor is another bird which has managed to get away from the crowds. Do you know where it is found? The accentor has chosen to take to the high places of Europe and Asia. It holds the altitude record among nest-builders. Its nests are found at heights of over 7,000 metres above sea level!



The song thrush of Europe, famous for its melodious singing, likes nothing better than a snail or two for breakfast. Since a snail retreats into its shell at the first sign of danger, how does the thrush manage to have its breakfast? It has a very efficient method of dealing with snails. It picks up a snail in its beak and with swift movements of its head, hammers the poor creature against a stone (called an anvil) until the shell breaks, and the bird can get at its food. Most thrushes take all their snails to a particular anvil. Anvils can, therefore, be recognised from the scattered shells lying around them.



Many birds, like parrots and mynahs, can be taught to speak whole sentences. It is strange that human beings cannot converse with them. Do you know why? When a bird speaks words or even sentences, it is just copying sounds and has no idea what they mean.



The majestic and proud peacock is the national bird of India. In what very important way does the Congo peafowl differ from the Indian variety? The Congo peafowl does not have the colourful 'train' of the Indian variety. The cock makes its courtship display to the hen with both wings and tail.



What is so remarkable about the European blackbird's ability to hunt for worms? The blackbird hunts worms by the sense of hearing. It can detect a worm moving under the surface of a lawn and knows exactly where to dig to find its victim. It then pulls the struggling worm out of the ground and eats it.



The eggs of most birds have to be properly incubated (kept warm) if they are to hatch. It is for this purpose that parent birds sit on their eggs. But the Australian brush-turkeys incubate their eggs without having to sit on them. The male bird digs a large hole on the ground and fills it with a mound of

grass, leaves, and other vegetation. The female lays her eggs in the mound and covers them up with sand. As the vegetation decomposes, heat is given off which incubates the eggs.




In 1963, an experiment on underwater living was conducted aboard a type of submarine called Conshelf II. A parrot named Claude was taken to live with the 'oceanauts'. Claude's job was to give warning if the air became foul. How did Claude manage to give such warning? In foul air, a parrot quickly becomes listless and then unconscious before human beings are overcome. Thus, Claude's condition would warn the oceanauts.



How do birds move about while on the ground? Some birds walk one step at a time, others walk in a series of hops. Observe carefully the birds you see everyday and find out how each one walks.

G.C. Prasad

**Ripley's Believe It or Not!**



**THERE WERE FOREWARNINGS AT THREE MILE ISLAND!**


Local residents in the area of the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant reported a prophetic nightmare in which they saw the cooling towers of Three Mile Island glowing deep red with lightning crackling all around.

**APPOINTMENTS**

In an episode of World N.Y. were made for P.M. on May 24, 1975 by **JOYCE MARTIN** and **MARTIN JOYCE**


**THE DROPOUT**

... GRADUATED AT THE AGE OF 98!



**BABE**

... elephant at the Brookfield Zoo in ... pulled by ... with a ...



# PUZZLES WITH PRIZE!

## RULES:

1. An all-correct answer to the following Quiz will fetch for the entrant a FREE membership to the CBT Book Club (see "Children's World" June 1983, page 2)

2. In the event of a tie, the membership fee of Rs 100/- will be DIVIDED equally among the successful entrants.

3. Each entry MUST be accompanied by the coupon below. An entry without the coupon will be automatically DISQUALIFIED.

4. The CLOSING DATE for receipt of entries is Monday, August 1. The correct SOLUTION, together with the name(s) of the prizewinner(s) will appear in the September 1983 issue

## QUIZ:

1. Which king in ancient legend was famous for a) his wisdom, b) his golden touch, c) his fabulous wealth?

2. In the life cycle of the butterfly, what are the three stages before it becomes an adult butterfly?

3. Which countries have these as emblems?  
a) The fleur-de-lis b) The pomegranate c) The maple leaf.

4. Which city was the first to have an underground railway system?

5. Who was the Roman god of the Sea?

6. In what country would you find: a) The pampas b) The fjords c) The polders?

7. In what sport do we get the Butterfly

and the Crawl?

8. What makes a catamaran different from other yachts?

9. Two different animals provide angora wool. What are they?

10. What fictional character wore a deer-stalker hat while he was tracking down criminals?

(First Features)

## JUGGLE-A-WORD RESULTS

In the Juggle-a-Word Contest (see CHILDREN'S WORLD, October 1982), the prize of Rs 25/- has been won by HITESH CHUGH of East Patel Nagar, New Delhi. He sent an entry with 100 words made out of "INCONSISTENT". The jury has accepted the following 81 words:

Ice, Icon, In, Im, Insist, Incite, Intent, Intention, Inset, Insect, Innocent, Into, Incise, Incest, Is, It.

Net, Nest, Neon, Nine, Nice, None, Note, No, Not, Notice, Nose.

Cent, Cess, Cine, Cite, Cist, Consist, Consistent, Cot, Cost, Content, Cone, Coin, Contest, Continent, Consent.

On, One, Once.

Set, Sect, Section, Sent, Scent, Seion, Scientist, Scot, Sit, Sin, Since, Sine, Site, Son, Stone, Stoic, Stet, Stint, Steno.

Ten, Tent, Test, Tenon, Tenson, Tension, Tennis, Tie, Tin, Tit, Tint, Tone, Toss, Toe, To, Ton, Tonic.

## CHILDREN'S WORLD QUIZ (JULY)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

10000

# Michael Arnold's **SCIENCE SPOT**

## ANIMALS WITH BUILT-IN THERMOSTATS

Nature's way of beating famine

VERY often we read in newspapers of someone or other going on a hunger strike—and if we're good trenchermen, we wonder how on earth they can last out as long as they do.

But some animals go on hunger strike every year for weeks at a time, in the process known as hibernation.

Actually, it isn't a rebellion against food, or against the cold weather (which makes many a commuter wish he could hibernate, too, instead of catching the 7.30 bus or train). It's Nature's way of coping with a definite shortage of food.

All warm-blooded animals (including man) have a built-in thermostat, rather like a central heating system. This thermostat is in the brain, and it activates such mechanisms as fluffing up fur and feathers, or even shivering, when the surrounding air temperature drops.

With human beings, the brain's thermostat impels them to take conscious action to keep warm, there being no fur or feather to fluff up and provide better insulators.

### Changed setting

Some animals actually have a built-in mechanism that enables them to change the thermostat setting, so that they operate at a much lower temperature.

In fact, they then vary so that their temperature adjusts to that of the surroundings. Fishes and frogs do this nor-

mally, and in that respect, hibernating animals, for part of the year, become like fishes and frogs.

There are three groups of hibernators. In one belong hedgehogs and other insect-eating mammals. In the second are the bats. These two groups go into a very deep kind of coma.

The third group are all rodents—they include some of the squirrels, hamsters and, of course, the dormouse, whose very name is a corruption of the French *dormeuse*, meaning a sleepy-head.

Whatever animal, the true hibernator seeks a cosy, sheltered spot for its long sleep. Some marmots burrow deep into the ground, making a nest with dried grass. Animals like the squirrel have a small store of winter food with them, for quiet snacks during the long winter months. Others don't eat at all.

When an animal has gone into its winter sleep, the change in its bodily activities is striking. Breathing drops from perhaps 15 breaths a minute to two; the heartbeat slows from as much as 300 a minute—common in some small rodents—to perhaps 10.

### Slimming process

During this period, the animal draws on its storage of fat. A sleek, podgy animal that retires into its burrow, closing the door behind it with stones and grass, may emerge in the spring having lost anything from one-third to

# Jeevan and Hanu communicate ABOUT COMMUNICATION

1983 is being observed everywhere as World Communications Year. It helps young people like you to understand the importance of communication in your lives. But what is communication?

It is the act of conveying information in order to establish a relationship with another individual. It's happening right now, while you're reading this. Jeevan and Hanu are communicating with you.



Life cannot exist without communication in some form, however crude. From the simplest bacteria, through all kinds of plants and animals, all the way to the most advanced human beings, they all communicate using sounds,

gestures, movements, odours, contact, colours — even electrical currents. In fact, an adult animal may have 15 to 35 different ways of expressing itself.

The Central American Howling Monkey has nine distinctive cries. One warns the tribe of threatened invasion or attack. Another means 'This way to a feeding spot'. If another male disagrees, a noisy dispute will follow.

Owls signal by snapping their bills, clapping wings together — even 'singing'. Owl-songs range from deep hoots to chirps, whistles and warblings. An endangered 'Burrowing' owl will imitate a rattlesnake's warning buzz. Courting Wood Owls engage in bowing, dancing and bobbing. In defence, they will fluff up their feathers, half-spreading their wings, while rocking their bodies and snapping their bills. Who wouldn't be scared?

The honeybee's dance informs other bees about new-found food sources. A long lively dance indicates rich food. A tail-wagging 'round' dance signals that food is nearby. 10 cycles to indicate a distance of 100 metres, 1 cycle for 10,000 metres. If the direction of the food is towards the sun, the bee will do an upward tail-wagging dance. Its body's angle against the hive-face indicates the angle of flight. This dance is also performed by 'scouts' to advertise the discovery of a new hive-site.



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AUGUST 1983

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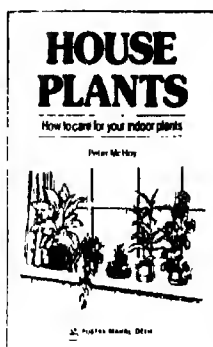
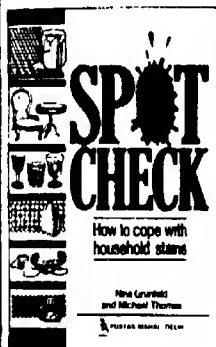
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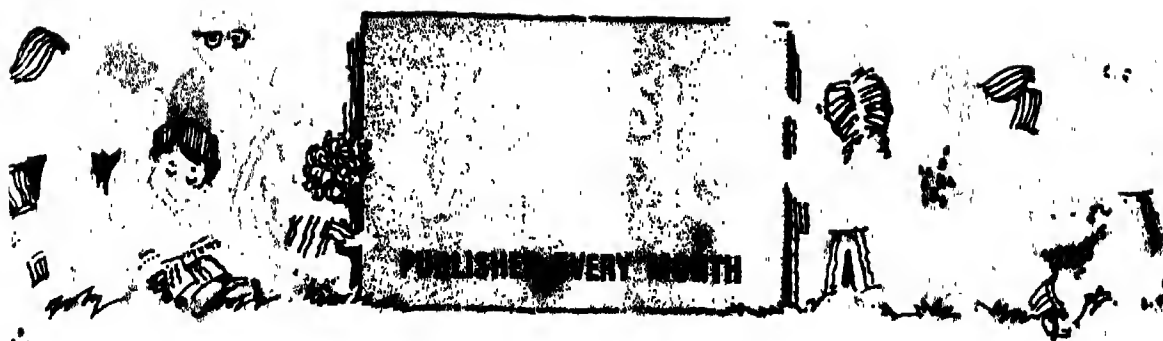
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Cover design by

**Mrinal Mitra**

© Children's World, 1983

# Two-way Talk

*Dear Editor,*

**Children's World** is a superb magazine, which really understands children and their imaginative minds. When I read it, I find myself taking part in every story or episode. Even the poems are too good for words. Although I am no critic, I like the stories by Sigrum Srivastava, R.K. Murthu, and Niharika Joshi.

*Mridula Nath, New Delhi*

I have been reading "**Children's World**" for the last three years. Every time I finish my exam, I take out the whole pile and read all the issues once again. I have read them so many times, yet the stories have a freshness about them. I liked the feature on Shankar's On-the-Spot Competition and the photographs and paintings "*The Postcard Monkey*" was very nice. Please give more of Paper Sculpture.

*Zarin Ahmad, Calcutta*

I love to read **Children's World**. There is always a fight between me and my brother when mummy brings in the latest issue. What I like in it are the stories and comics. Why have you stopped Kapish? Please start a jokes page.

*Vrinduli P. Vadkarni, Bombay*

What I find missing in the magazine is Humour. Once we used to have Kapish, Jadugar Jui, Detective Shambu, and similar humorous features to fill us with laughter. Please start a page for jokes.

*Alladi Mohan, Nellore*

I am new to **Children's World**. It is delightful to read. You should publish more comics like Inspector Garud, jokes, and news features. Please start a **Children's World Book Club**. You could also organize competitions, quiz contests, etc.

*Raja Mukherjee, Calcutta*

I am happy that I became a member of

**Children's World**, because it helps me to know more about day to day life.

*N. Vijaya, Madras*

"On the Kidnappers' Trail" is full of suspense. Please publish more such stories.

*Gautam Talukdar, Pathala*

*Dear Readers,*

We greet you on the eve of India's Independence Day with the first special number for this year. Two of the stories will help you remember personalities who brought glory to India - like Babur who founded the Mughal empire, and King Vikramaditya of earlier times, who was wise enough to advise even the Lord of the Heavens. Mightily pleased with him, Lord Indra - we are told - gifted him with a beautiful throne. We thought we could feature the throne on the cover - a novelty we hadn't tried hitherto. Any comments? We are glad many of you like our serial story "On the Kidnappers' Trail", which is now slowly moving towards an exciting finish. To meet your demands for more humorous items, we give, besides your favourite "Letter from Perky", two stories - "The Muddled Message" and "Wishes and Sausages", the latter from France. There will be a page full of jokes from the next issue. Some of them will be illustrated! Last month we brought for you a new series of comics - "Tales for Children" - and we also introduced to you the illustrator, Frank Bolle. We hope you will like this month's feature on the creator of that famous character, Tintin. The story of two young readers of **Children's World** was brought to us only recently, and we pay our tributes to them in "The Tale of Two Brothers". We have also not forgotten the World Cup heroes and the Wimbledon winners.

**EDITOR**

# MASTER OF MY FATE



**B**ABUR woke up, hearing the persistent rustle of the wind against the protective tent sheets fastened to the poles driven deep in the ground. He raised himself up, slightly, resting his frame on a pile of pillows, listening to the music which the wind played by tapping on the poles and bristling round the puffed-up sheets. It was as if nature was playing an exotic tune for his benefit.

While the music held him in its grip, he let his eyes wander. Then he saw the star, peeping in through a tiny slit in the top cover of the tent. It was a bright star, and resembled a big diamond, hung in space, dancing with delight. Babur rose from the bed. He paced the rough uneven ground, occasionally catch-

ing sight of the star. But he was more concerned with the strategy for the next day's fight. It would be crucial. He knew that the Rajputs had gathered in large numbers. They had eighty thousand horsemen. Moreover, seven princes had joined hands to avert the danger. A number of local chieftains, too, had joined the princes. The combined strength of the Rajput forces thus posed a real threat to Babur. But he had confidence in himself. He had scoffed at reports from some of his close confidantes that it might be foolish to come to a head on collision with the Rajputs. To him, the options were clear. He would either triumph or he would die on the battlefield. The die was cast.

Like the lonely star which winked

and blinked, daring darkness to stifle its light, Babur was resolved to defy the might of the Rajputs, to show them that nothing could turn him away from his goal.

Hope surged within him when he walked towards the exit from the tent. A watchman, romping with a long, glistening spear, parted the curtain which hung down the exit, bowed, and waited. Babur stepped out. He saw the red glow in the east. It was nearing dawn.

He stood and watched the blue sky getting a tinge of red. A bugle sounded. His camp, which lay in a cloak of silence, suddenly came alive. Yet another day had arrived.

"The time has come for me to prove my mettle. Today will be the day," Babur muttered to himself as he moved back to the tent. He sank onto the bed, reached for the goblet, filled it with rippling wine from a carafe and sipped the potion.

The first draught of wine blazed through his throat, setting his inwards on fire. His fair face turned red.

He sipped the potion slowly. He emptied the contents of the goblet, reached out for the carafe to refill the goblet when he heard the shuffle of feet. He looked up. One of his amirs stood hesitantly at the entrance.

"Come in, Shahir. What brings you here?" Babur welcomed the man.

Shahir bowed low, walked in, stood on the uneven ground, close to Babur.

"Yes, Shahir. What brings you here at this hour? You should now be getting our men together, preparing for the battle today."

"But, there is danger, Badshah. The soldiers think that the time is not propitious for a fight. Muhammad Sharif . . . ."

"The star-gazer?"

"Yes. He thinks that the constellation Sakkiz Yildozi (eight stars) is in opposition. He has told the soldiers that he sees nothing good for us today, that the battle will turn against us. The soldiers are feeling restless. They are in no mood to fight."

"Aha," a cloud spread over Babur's face. Just for a second. Then his face lit up. His eyes gained a rare glint. He turned to Shahir and said, "Don't worry, I will talk to our men. I will inspire them with the will to fight. They know me. They love me. They have earned riches under my command. They can't let stars decide the issue. I am the leading star. They have only to follow me. Call them together. I'll address the soldiers."

"I hope they will see reason," Shahir muttered.

"They will. They have no other option. Either they can fight with the will to win. Or they can get beaten by the Rajputs, be taken prisoners, imprisoned, maimed, killed, or enslaved. Don't worry. They will fight. I am their leader. I know them well."

"All right, Badshah."



The soldiers hailed their chief. But the resounding echoes of their cheering lacked the usual enthusiasm. Babur could sense it. But he ignored it. He waited till the soldiers stood silently, ready to listen to his words. He hailed Allah. The soldiers joined the call. Thrice he called out for Allah and his mercy. Thrice the soldiers joined him in a chorus.

Then Babur turned to them. "My dear men, today we will prove our might. We will reveal to the Rajputs the valour and chivalry of the men from

beyond the Oxus. Here, on this battle ground of Sikri, we will prove our military superiority. And here we will lay the foundation of our empire. Together we will teach the infidels the right ways of Islam. Allah be pleased!"

There was a slight rustle. One of the soldiers dared to say, "But, Sha-in-sha, our astrologer Muhammad Sharif... the man who knows all about stars and planets and their influences... says that today is not auspicious for us."

"Ah, did Sharif say that? I never knew. But I feel today is our day. The day on which we will triumph. I have no doubts in my mind. Shed all doubts about our ability to win. We will win. We will win if only you fight with determination. I know that the Rajputs have assembled in large numbers. I know they have several thousand horsemen. They have elephants. They have footmen, too, in thousands. But what they don't have is the need to win

That we have. We can't lose." Babur paused, waiting for his words to make an impact.

A mild breeze passed swiftly, carrying the fragrance of exotic roses in bloom in the middle of March (it was the 16th of March, 1527).

"I said we can't lose. We can't afford to lose. Don't you know that there lies a journey of some months between us and the land of our birth and our familiar city? If our side is defeated—God save us from that day! God forbid it!—where are we? Where is our birthplace? Where is our city? We have to do with strangers and foreigners. It is in every way best for each man to set resolutely before himself the two alternatives; if we win, we are avengers of the cause of God (because we are fighting the infidels). If we lose, we die martyrs. In either fate lies our salvation. Each is an onward stage in greatness."

Babur concluded, waiting for the

meaning of his words to sink into his men. Slowly, the soldiers responded. Then the response gained momentum. The men shouted, "We swear by the Holy Koran to fight with all our will. We will win. We will triumph. Ah, did Sharif say that the stars are not with us? Who cares for the stars? We have our star in our leader. He will lead us to victory, as he has done so far." They shouted, "Oh King! God willing, we will not spare ourselves in sacrifice and devotion, so long as there is breath and life in our bodies."

"Allah-ho-Akbar!" Babur raised the slogan.

The soldiers echoed the call again and again.

Babur stood, watching the new spirit of valour which he had injected into them. He stood, while his men began


to get ready for the battle.

He looked up. The lone star which had winked at him at night was not visible. Nor were the eight stars, whose combination had indicated to the astrologer danger for Babur, anywhere visible. The nightiest star, the sun, had overshadowed all the other stars. Babur smiled to himself, "What can the constellation of the eight stars do when the sun is with me? I am the master of my fate. Not the stars. Not their strange configurations."

He was right. The day's battle proved the might of Babur and his men. The stars had been proved ineffective. Sharif, the astrologer, admitted, "Babur is master of his fate. Stars, even the most evil combination of stars, can do nothing to our master."


R. K. Murthi

**Ripley's Believe It or Not!**




**FILL 2 GLASSES with WATER and WINE**  
— then cover the waterglass with a card and invert it on the wineglass. Shift the card slightly — and the wine and water will change glasses

**JONATHAN SCHAFER**  
age 3 playing in Heady Cemetery in Fishers, Ind., was knocked down and pinned by a tombstone overturned by a playmate on October 7, 1980. The grave was that of another 3-year-old who had died October 7, 1897, and the tombstone's inscription reads:  
"As you are now, so once was I and as I am now, you will be. Prepare for death and follow me. Although injured, Jonathan recovered!"  
Submitted by Ms. Sarah J. Lennon, Warren, Ind.



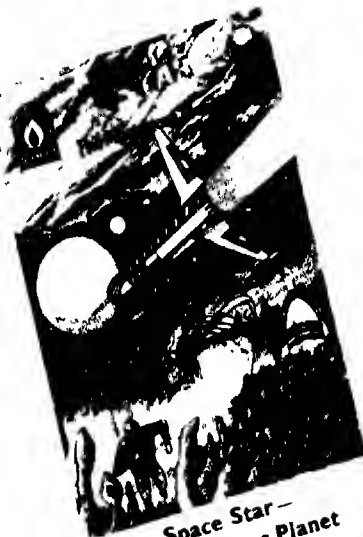
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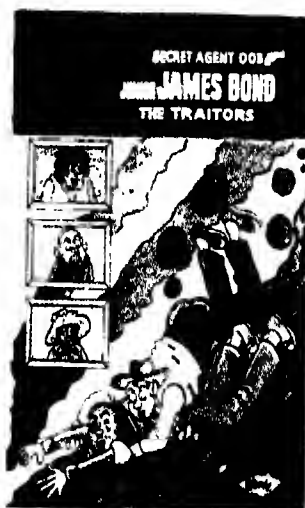
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**M**ENTION these three names to a child — Georges Remi, Herge, Tintin—he will, without fail, recognise the third one. And an older child may say, "Herge? But he draws Tintin!" Perhaps only the children of Belgium will tell us that 'Herge' is the pseudonym Georges Remi had adopted, by phonetically converting his initials R.G. (Remi, Georges). He did that when he was 22; he had by then already introduced his lovable character, Tintin, to the reading public.

Born in Brussels on May 22, 1907, Remi became a boy scout when he was eleven. He was fascinated by the youth magazine called 'The Belgian Boy Scout' and tried his hand at illustrating the stories in it. He was sixteen then. A character slowly began taking shape in his mind—a boy scout, and Remi named him Totor. The first cartoon strips with Totor appeared in 1926.

Though by then popular in the U.S.A., strip cartoons were something novel for the people of Belgium, and the youth among them were immediately attracted to the feature. In 1927, Remi was invited by a daily published from Brussels to take charge of its weekly supplement for youth. It was his association with a newspaper that gave Remi the idea of fashioning a character after a cub-reporter-cum-photographer.

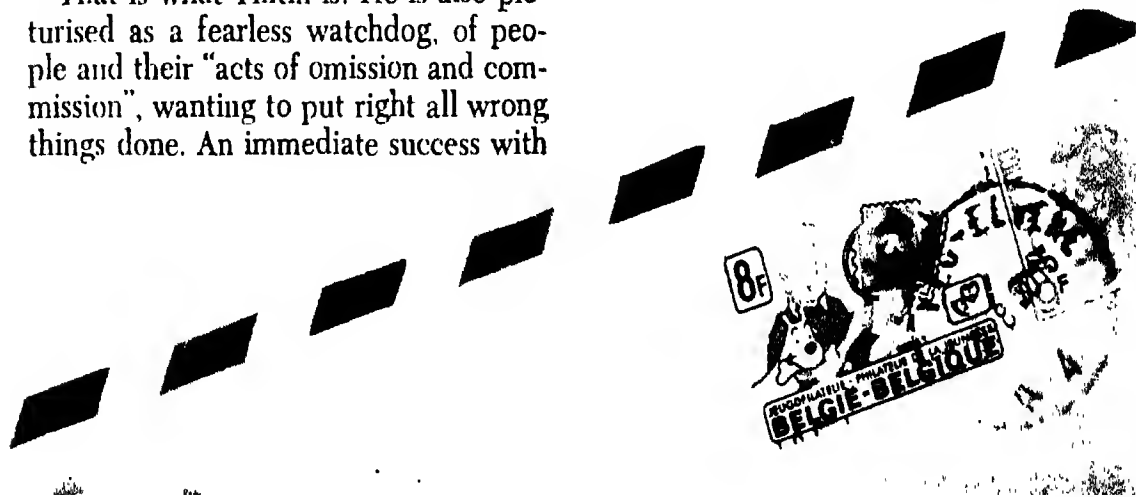
That is what Tintin is. He is also pictured as a fearless watchdog of people and their "acts of omission and commission", wanting to put right all wrong things done. An immediate success with

the readers, the blond reporter, Tintin, and his exciting adventures that have taken him to all sorts of exotic lands, have endeared themselves to almost three generations of readers. At the time of creation, Tintin was hardly 15. He has been appearing in strips, week after week, over the last fifty years, yet he has "grown" only by three or four years, as his creator admits!

*(Turn to page 72)*



LASZLO CAPI





May 8, 1979

*Dear Friend,*

Please excuse me for answering so late to your kind letter of March 19th, but my postbag has been weighed down by the 50th anniversary of Tintin!

Thank you very much for your birthday wishes.

What is going on under the roof of Marlinspike Hall? Nothing special! Everything is going on like usually: it means that I have a lot of work!.....

What is the new Tintin's adventure about? I am working on it, but it is still too soon to talk about it. Anyway, Tintin will probably not go this time to Calcutta. Later, maybe. Who knows?....

Enclosed, you will find some stamps of Tintin and his friends, especially made for the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Tintin.

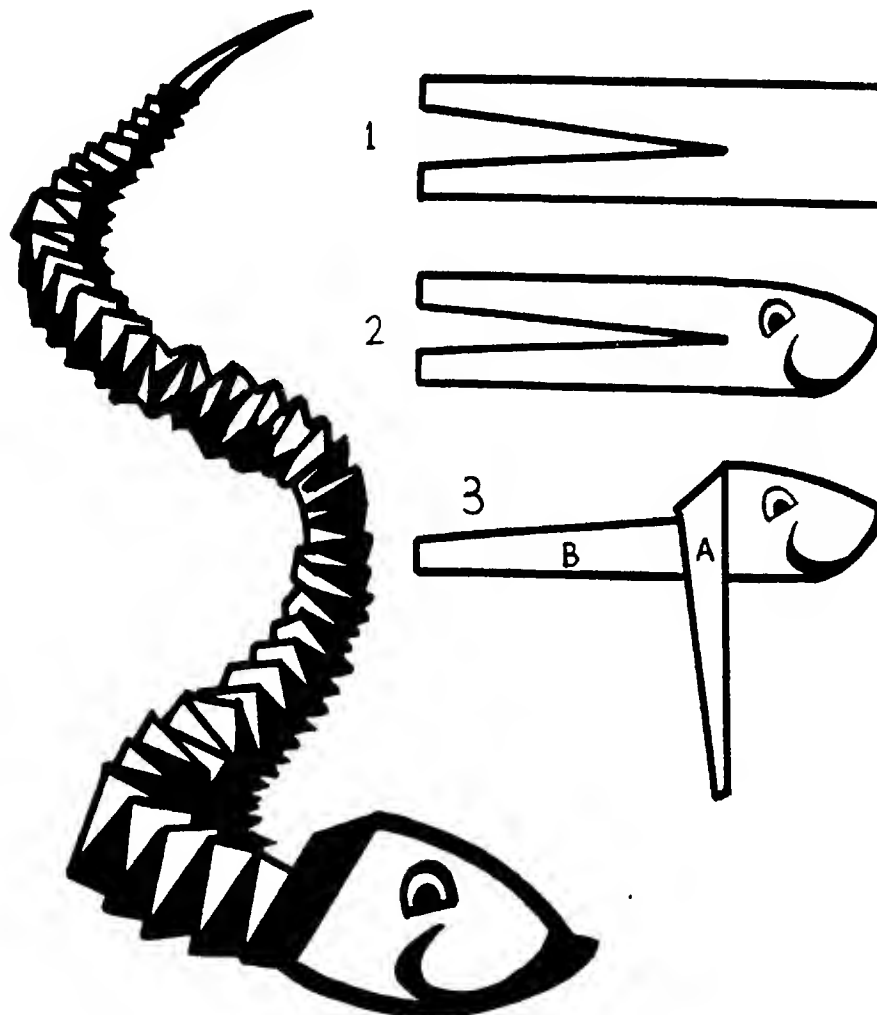
Sincerely yours

*Hergé*



**Y**OU will need (i) coloured paper 50cm × 4cm, (ii) pencil, (iii) scissors, (iv) ruler, and (v) crayons. Draw Fig. 1 on your 50cm strip of coloured paper and cut it out. Then make the head, as shown in Fig. 2. Fold strip over strip B, as shown in Fig. 3. Now fold strip B over strip A. Go on folding until the worm is complete. Glue the ends to form tail. Then watch the wiggly worm wriggle in your hands!

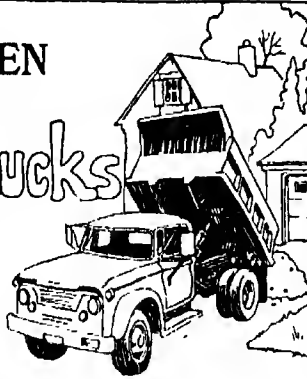
K. K. Jeswani



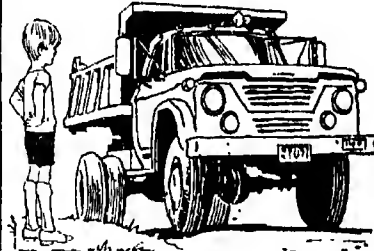
## TALES FOR CHILDREN

# The Day of The Trucks

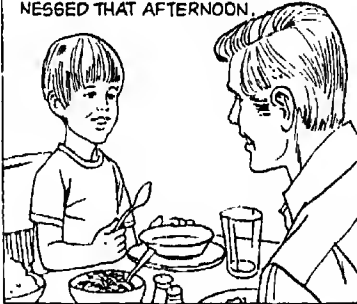
THE DRIVER PULLED A LEVER AND THE BACK OF THE TRUCK LIFTED SLOWLY. ANOTHER PULL OF THE LEVER OPENED THE TAILGATE AND THE FULL LOAD OF SAND FLOWED OUT, MAKING A PERFECTLY FORMED MOUNTAIN IN MR RICHMOND'S DRIVEWAY. I



PAUL HAD NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE IN HIS LIFE. HE LOVED TO PLAY WITH TOY TRUCKS, BUT NOW SEEING A REAL TRUCK IN ACTION, WELL, WHAT CAN COMPARE WITH THAT?



THAT EVENING AT THE DINNER TABLE PAUL TOLD HIS FATHER ABOUT THE WONDERFUL THINGS HE HAD WITNESSED THAT AFTERNOON.



"AND THIS MAN JUST PULLED A THING AND THERE WAS A SAND MOUNTAIN," SAID PAUL. "RIGHT THERE IT WOULD TAKE ME A MONTH TO MAKE ONE THAT HIGH ON THE BEACH!" "WELL," SAID DAD, "WE WERE PLANNING TO SURPRISE YOU WITH A NEW TRUCK FOR YOUR BIRTHDAY, BUT I GUESS YOU WOULDN'T BE INTERESTED IN A TOY ANYMORE."



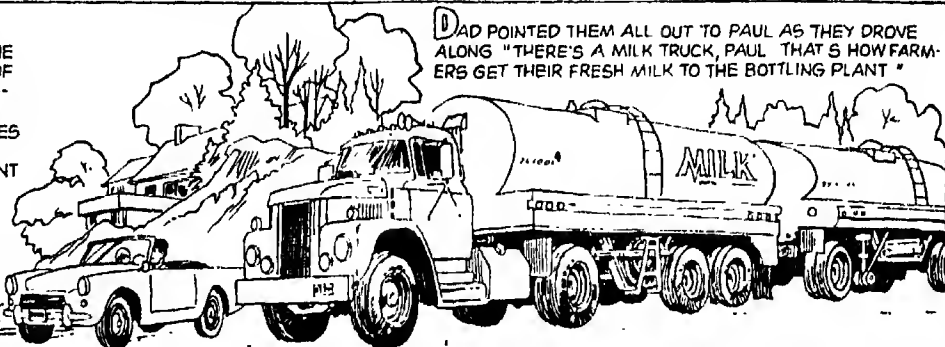
"OH, YES, I WOULD," SHOUTED PAUL, HAPPILY. DAD SMILED. "ALL RIGHT, THEN, WHAT KIND OF TRUCK WILL IT BE?" "CEE, I DON'T KNOW," ANSWERED PAUL. "I'LL TELL YOU WHAT," DAD SAID. "TOMORROW YOU'LL COME TO TOWN WITH ME AND WE'LL LOOK AT SOME REAL TRUCKS AT WORK THEN YOU CAN PICK YOUR FAVORITE AND I'LL TRY TO GET YOU A TOY ONE JUST LIKE IT."



PAUL WAS SO EXCITED, HE FINISHED ALL HIS STRING BEANS WITHOUT MOM SAYING A WORD.



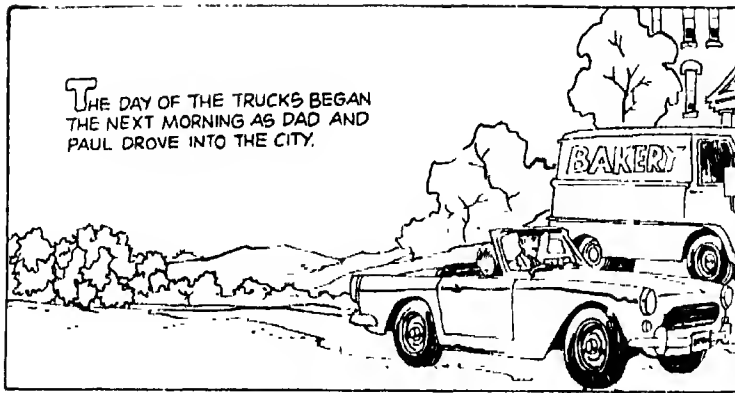
BEFORE THEY EVEN GOT TO THE CITY, THE DAY OF THE TRUCKS BEGAN. MANY DIFFERENT TYPES OF TRUCKS IN MANY DIFFERENT SIZES SPED ALONG THE HIGHWAY TO THEIR VARIOUS DESTINATIONS IN THE CITY.



DAD POINTED THEM ALL OUT TO PAUL AS THEY DROVE ALONG. "THERE'S A MILK TRUCK, PAUL. THAT'S HOW FARMERS GET THEIR FRESH MILK TO THE BOTTLING PLANT."

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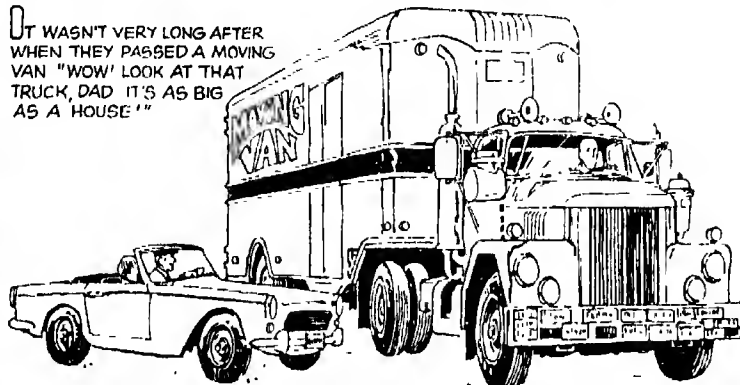


THE DAY OF THE TRUCKS BEGAN THE NEXT MORNING AS DAD AND PAUL DROVE INTO THE CITY.

THERE'S A MILK TRUCK 'DAD POINTED OUT "IT'S WHITE," SAID PAUL "I HOPE WE SEE A BROWN ONE"



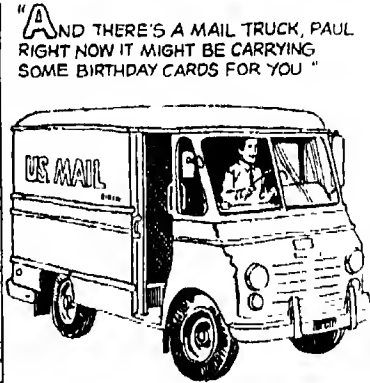
"A BROWN ONE? WHY?" DAD ASKED. "CHOCOLATE MILK," SAID PAUL. DAD LAUGHED. "THAT'S ALSO DONE AT THE BOTTLING PLANT. I DOUBT VERY MUCH THAT WE'LL SEE A BROWN ONE"



IT WASN'T VERY LONG AFTER WHEN THEY PASSED A MOVING VAN "WOW! LOOK AT THAT TRUCK, DAD IT'S AS BIG AS A HOUSE!"



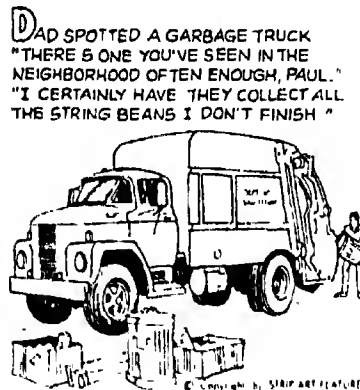
"IT SHOULD BE," SAID DAD. "THAT'S A MOVING VAN. IT HOLDS EVERYTHING THAT CAN FIT IN A HOUSE--THE WHOLE FAMILY'S BELONGINGS."



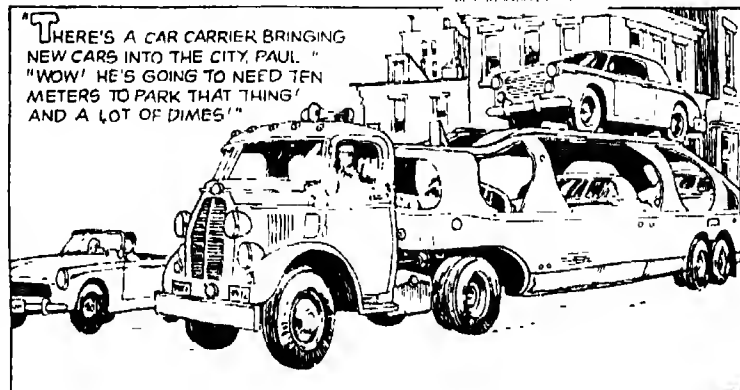
"AND THERE'S A MAIL TRUCK, PAUL RIGHT NOW IT MIGHT BE CARRYING SOME BIRTHDAY CARDS FOR YOU"



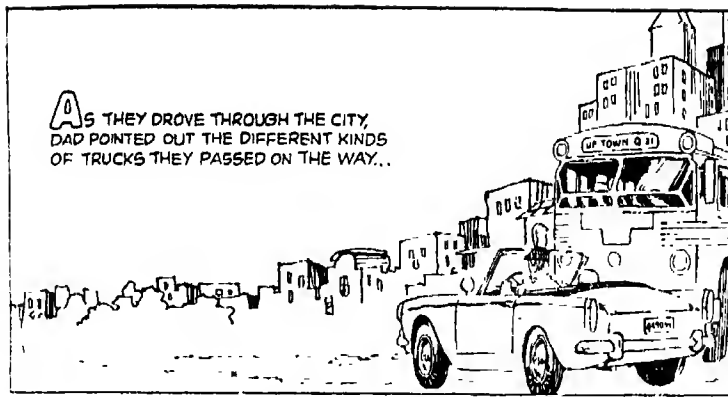
"REALLY? LET'S ASK THE DRIVER!" "HE WOULDN'T KNOW WHAT'S IN THE MAIL BAGS I'M AFRAID YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO WAIT 'TIL YOU GET THEM TOMORROW"



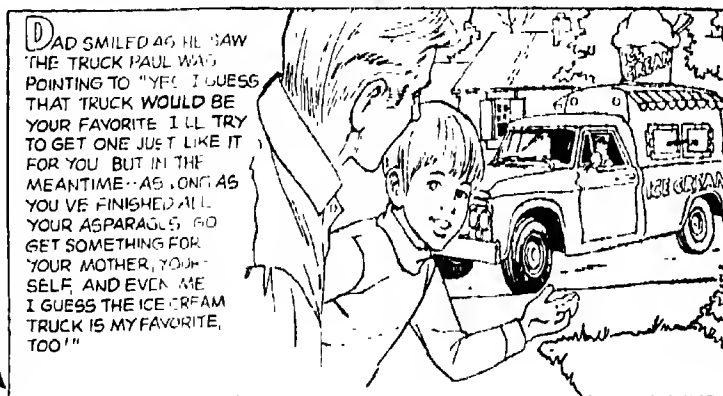
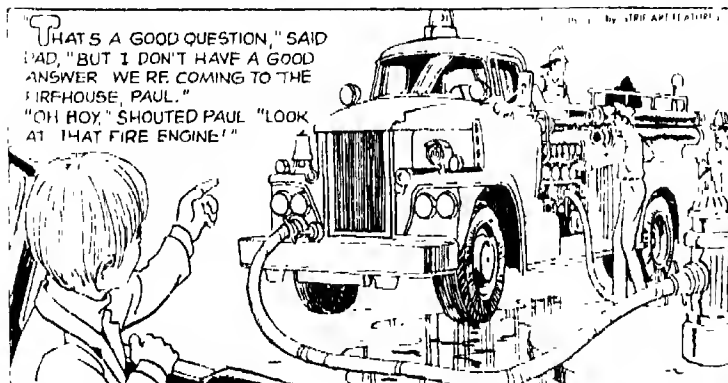
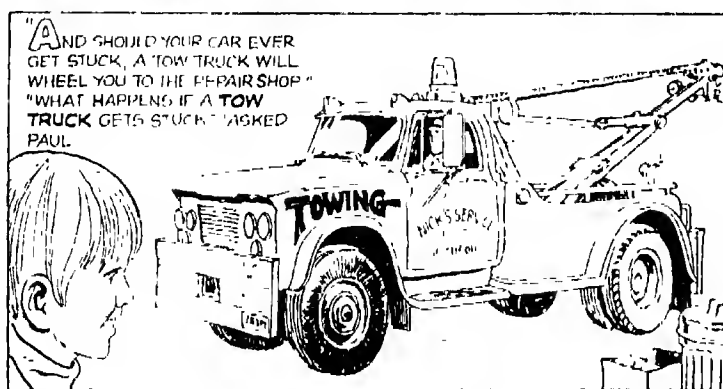
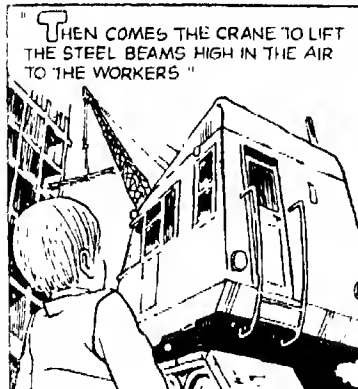
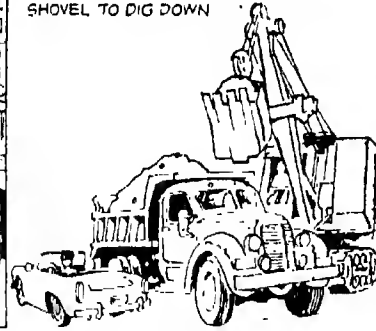
DAD SPOTTED A GARBAGE TRUCK "THERE'S ONE YOU'VE SEEN IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OFTEN ENOUGH, PAUL." "I CERTAINLY HAVE THEY COLLECT ALL THE STRING BEANS I DON'T FINISH"

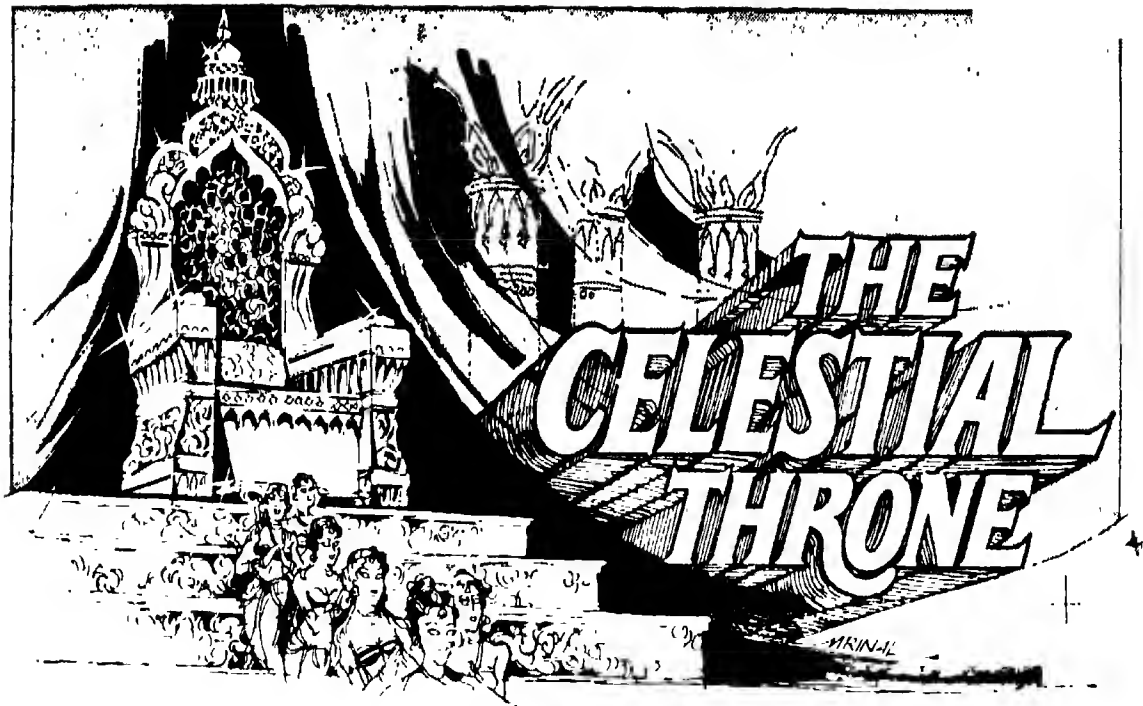


"THERE'S A CAR CARRIER BRINGING NEW CARS INTO THE CITY, PAUL." "WOW! HE'S GOING TO NEED TEN METERS TO PARK THAT THING! AND A LOT OF DIMES!"



"WHEN TALL BUILDINGS ARE PUT UP," SAID DAD, "FIRST COMES THE STEAM SHOVEL TO DIG DOWN."





**Y**OU might be familiar with the name of King Vikramaditya and the stories of his varied adventures. He was also known for his wisdom. In fact, it was his unfailing wisdom and commonsense that enabled him to win the lifelong loyalty and service of a demon named Vetala.

Vikramaditya's fame as a wise king also reached Lord Indra in Heaven. Indra was greatly perturbed at that time and was bent on breaking the intense 'tapas' of a great sage. He wanted one of his court dancers to go to the sage and disturb his concentration. But he could not quite decide whom to send. There was Urvashi in all her loveliness; there was Rambha, too, who was no mean dancer. Only the best would serve his purpose, and Indra did not know who the best among them was. It was no use appealing to the dancers themselves, when each claimed to be superior to the other!

Indra, therefore, called a sabha (gathering) of all the devas. Urvashi

danced the first day. Rambha danced the next. Both were applauded, and the devas could not decide who was the more talented. Indra then sent for sage Narada and sought his advice. "Oh King of Heaven!" said Narada "There is just one person who is qualified enough to judge the matter. And he is King Vikramaditya."

Indra sent his charioteer, Matali, to fetch the king from earth.

Vikramaditya left his capital, Ujjain, for a while and reached Heaven to decide the issue. A special stage was set up, where Rambha danced the first day and Urvashi the second. The king watched them both carefully and pronounced Urvashi to be the better of the two.

"Why?" asked Indra and the devas together. They were puzzled because he was so confident.

Vikramaditya, who was a great scholar, quoted the scriptures and told them what a dancer's qualifications ought to be. Indra was satisfied. He thanked

Vikramaditya and gave him a great many gifts. The most precious of them all was a celestial throne — a gorgeous piece of work, studded all over with precious gems. The throne was supported by thirty-two beautiful dolls, which also served as the steps.

Vikramaditya was delighted with the throne. He had it installed in the royal court and used it all his life. When after a very long and fruitful reign, he died without any sons, his courtiers wondered what they should do with the celestial throne. Just then, they heard an oracle from heaven: "There is no one on earth at the moment who is worthy of Vikramaditya's throne. Have it buried at some lonely spot!"

The courtiers obeyed the oracle.

Many, many years later, King Bhoja became the king of Ujjain. He knew nothing about the celestial throne, of course. The land where it was buried had come into the possession of a poor brahmin, who sowed barley there. A corner of his field was somewhat raised, where the brahmin had a small platform made. There he sat the whole day, keeping an eye on the crop.

One day, King Bhoja came for a ride with his young sons and passed by the brahmin's land. He saw the king and said, "I am so delighted to see you here, your majesty. Do come in, and let your horses feed on my crops. Let your men help themselves to my fruits. I had never dreamt of an honour like this! Only do step in!"

King Bhoja did as he was told. The brahmin came down from his perch to receive him but started abusing him. Instead! "How dare you come in like this!" he raged. "You may be the king, but that doesn't give you the right to s'win the crops of your poor subjects! You are a well-read man! Then how dare

you behave like this? To whom should we turn if the king himself turns tyrant?"

Amazed at this unfair ranting, the king turned away with his men. The brahmin climbed on to the perch once again and said, "My Lord, what makes you turn away? Didn't I tell you that my fields are full of crops and fruits? I shall consider myself fortunate if you come in and partake of them. Please step in, and let your horses and men feed freely."

Though astonished at this sudden change in the brahmin, King Bhoja entered the field once again. And once again the brahmin climbed down from his perch and started abusing him as before!

The king then realised that there was something strange about the platform where the brahmin had sat, as it had filled him with noble desires which were not really his own and which he lost as soon as he alighted from that place. The king went up himself and sat on the perch. All at once, he was filled with noble thoughts and desires, the like of which he had never felt before. He wanted to banish poverty and end all misery in the entire universe, even at the cost of his life. He even felt a strong desire to lay down his life for the good of mankind.

King Bhojraj gave the brahmin a lot of money and bought the field from him. He then told his men to dig under the platform and see if there was anything buried there. After digging deep, they came upon a large slab of stone. And under the slab lay the most exquisite throne any one had ever seen.

King Bhoja was overjoyed at the discovery and tried to move it, but it seemed very heavy. Not even all his men, with their combined effort, could move the throne. Puzzled and perplexed, King Bhoja sent for his minister.



The minister was a wise old man. He took a good look at the throne and said, "Sir, this appears to be a celestial throne. Good deeds alone will enable us to move it."

The king then arranged for a large yajna, followed by large scale distribution of gifts to brahmins, to the poor and the needy. After this, the throne grew as light as a feather and started moving on its own.

King Bhoja was delighted. He had a special hall built with a thousand pillars, where he installed the throne. He was quite determined to use it himself, little dreaming of the shock in store for him!

The eventful day arrived, at last. King Bhoja, attired in new clothes and gleaming jewels, completed the traditional rituals and gave away the usual charities. He then walked over to the celestial throne, glittering in the morning sun, and was about to climb up. The thirty-two dolls were smiling like thirty-two heavenly nymphs. Their heads were meant to serve as steps. King Bhoja looked at the first one and was about to rest his foot on its head when the doll spoke in a human voice. "Wait!" it said. "This celestial throne you are about to climb belonged to King Vikramaditya. He was a great monarch—brave, just, noble, and generous. A king who does not have these qualities cannot sit on this throne!"

King Bhoja was startled, but he smiled complacently. "Well, I am aware that Vikramaditya was a great king," he said, "but I am equally great. I, too, am noted for my nobility and generosity."

The doll tossed its pretty head. "Ah!" said the doll. "A truly great man never speaks of his nobility himself. In fact, he will never think himself to be great at all. It is villains and fools who blow

their own trumpets. So, you must be either of the two!"

King Bhoja was startled by the doll's outspokenness, but he was too honest not to realise the truth of its accusation. "You are right," he said humbly. "It was foolish of me to have said that. Now tell me about Vikramaditya, instead."

"King Vikramaditya was an extremely generous king," said the doll. "There are many wealthy kings in the world, but not every one can give away freely. Now, Vikramaditya gave away thousands of gold coins to the needy, even without their asking. He gave it to whoever came and spoke to him, to everyone who pleased him in any way, to everyone whom he considered to be great, noble, or good. Can you give as freely, Bhojaraj?"

The king hung his head and said nothing. He then turned to the second doll. The second doll also spoke as the first one had. "Have you got Vikramaditya's generosity and nobility of mind, sire?" it asked.

This time, King Bhoja did not try to speak of his own virtues. He said, "Tell me all about it." And the doll began her story.

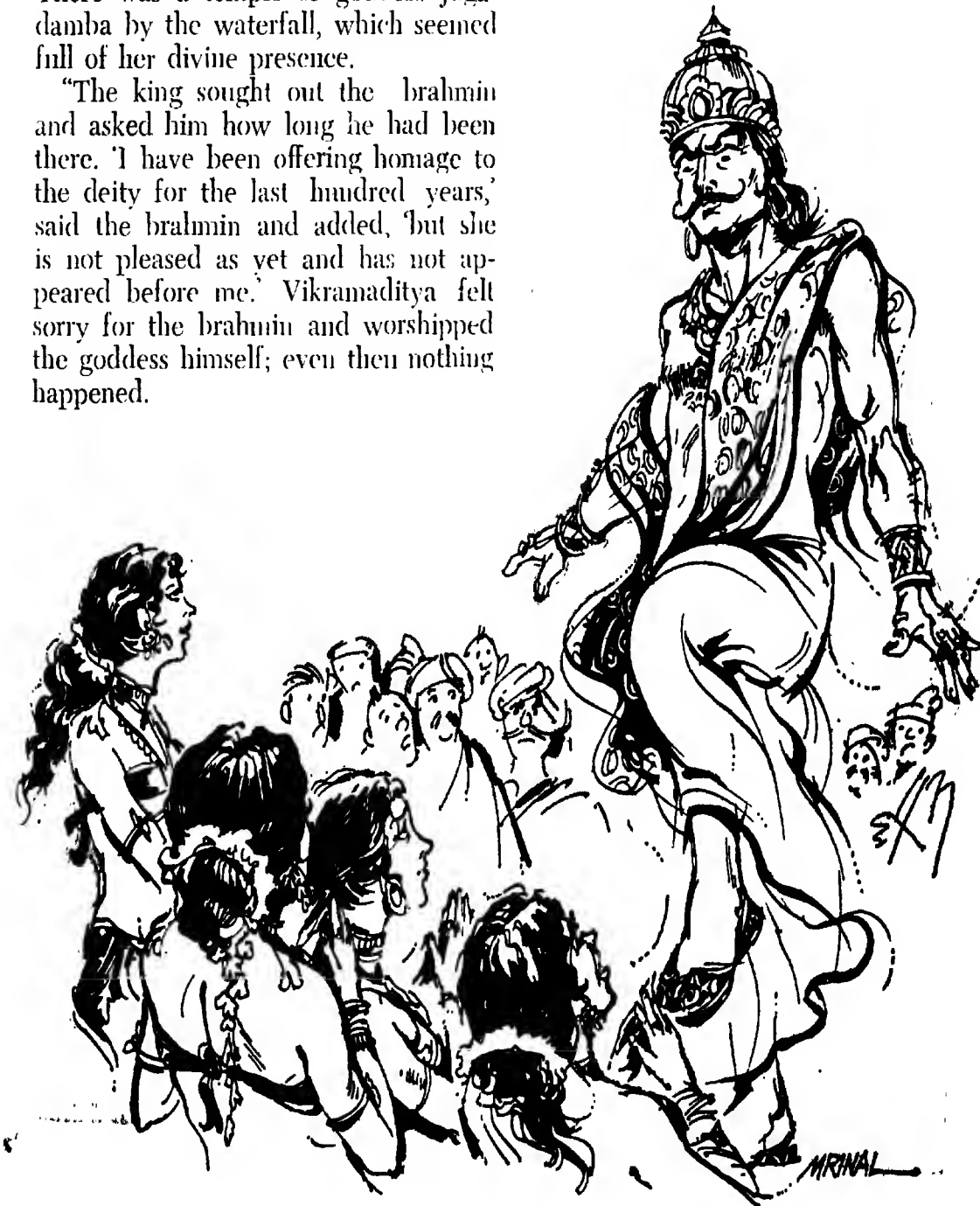
"Vikramaditya was a great one for travelling. He once sent for a group of men and asked them to go all over the country. 'Go, travel everywhere, and if you see any strange sights or anything at all worth seeing, come and tell me all about it. I'll go and see them personally.' Those selected for travelling went off in different directions. Months rolled by. Finally, one of the travellers returned to the king and said, 'Sire, I have seen a beautiful place. I think you should visit it.'

"Tell me about it," said the king. The traveller said, 'There is a deep forest near the Chitrakuta hills and an enor-

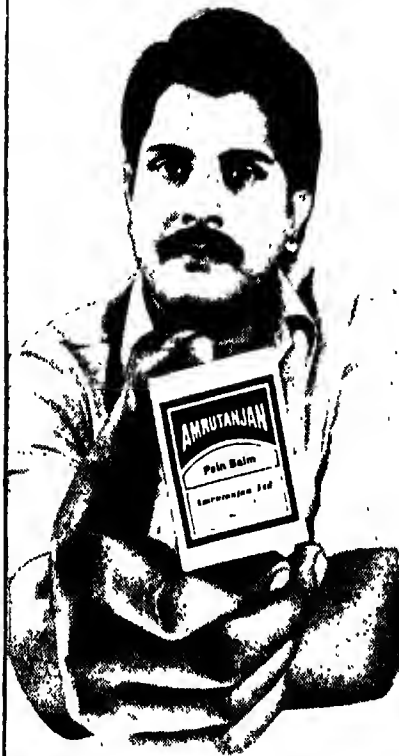
mous waterfall. Anyone bathing in the water will be able to wash off all his sins and emerge purified. A brahmin lives in the lonely forest and offers homage to the holy waterfall every day. They say he has been doing it for hundreds of years. It is indeed a very strange place.' Vikramaditya went all the way and was delighted at the sight. There was a temple of goddess Jagadamba by the waterfall, which seemed full of her divine presence.

"The king sought out the brahmin and asked him how long he had been there. 'I have been offering homage to the deity for the last hundred years,' said the brahmin and added, 'but she is not pleased as yet and has not appeared before me.' Vikramaditya felt sorry for the brahmin and worshipped the goddess himself; even then nothing happened.

"'Very well,' said the king addressing the idol, 'I shall offer my life and see if that will satisfy you or not.' He then took out his sword and, just when he was about to chop off his own head, Jagadamba appeared before him and



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stopped him. 'I'm satisfied,' she said, smiling at the king. 'Ask for any boon you like.'

"Before I ask for a boon, I must ask you a question," said the king.

"What is it?" asked the goddess.

"This man here has been offering homage to you for the last hundred years and yet you are not satisfied. How then, did I succeed in satisfying you so easily?"

"The goddess smiled. 'This man has been worshipping me for a hundred years, no doubt, but his rituals have been mechanical. His heart was not in his prayers. Moreover, he prayed for his own selfish ends and not because of any genuine devotion to me. How can I be satisfied with prayers which are mere recitations, and with love that springs from selfish ends and, therefore, no love at all? You, Vikramaditya, had no ulterior motives. You offered your life for the sake of this man whom you don't even know and who means nothing to you. How could I fail to be pleased by such selfless generosity? Now ask for any boon you like.'

"I want nothing for myself, Mother," said Vikramaditya unhesitatingly, 'but if you are pleased, grant this brahmin his heart's desire.'

"So be it," said the goddess and disappeared as suddenly as she had appeared.

"Now, Bhoja raj," said the doll, "would you have offered your life for a stranger? Would you have asked for a boon for another? If so, you are welcome to sit on this throne!"

King Bhoja looked away for a while and turned to the third doll.

Bublee

*(To be continued)*



### THE STORY SO FAR

Examinations over, Biju and Pratap plan a movie programme. 'Police' Appu (he had earned the nick-name after he, like a dare devil, had succeeded in separating two ruffians grappling in front of their school) suggests, they should remind their master, Rajasekhhar, of his promise of a picnic. Their classmates Smitha, Vinita, Gopi, and John accompany them to the Staff room. Rajasekhhar asks them where they would like to go. Smitha's choice is the Dam. But that is rather far away. Appu mentions Kali Hills. But who will want to go there even in broad daylight? Rajasekhhar mentions the ancient Koickal Palace. He asks the children to meet him again the next morning to finalise the programme. They are in for a surprise the next day. Their teacher, Sarada, too, is to join them for the picnic!

On Sunday, the children are all excited as they get into the school bus. They forget

themselves in singing and chatting till they reach Koickal Palace an hour-and-a-half later. They all move about the 17th century Palace, listening to Rajasekhhar who tells them of its history. Later, they adjourn to the park around. After a leisurely lunch, the children are allowed to roam about in the garden. Appu, Pratap, Biju and John reach the nearby forest from where they have a good view of the Kali Hills. John wonders why people are so scared of the hills.

Pratap has a story to tell them: It appears the ancient temple was built by a sage. The idol depicted 'Bhadrakali' in an angry mood and was frightening to look at. Little wonder that nobody went there. The few who dared to go up the hill and the temple with any intention other than worship had all met with tragedy. Like the Englishman, Watson, who raised a tea estate around the hill with the help of labour from far-away villages.

The very day he moved into his new bungalow with his wife, the two fell from their terrace and died. Or like the young man three years later. People saw him wave his handkerchief from the terrace of the haunted bungalow. He was never seen again. Then there were three other adventurers. While climbing, one of them slipped and fell and broke his leg, and had to be carried down to a hospital. That was 20 years ago, says Pratap, adding that the place now only echoes strange noises.

All this is "nonsense" to 'police' Appu. He assures his friends that he will go up the hill one day and show them that "these stories are just rubbish". Before the others can caution him against any such "derring-do", they are called by their teachers. It's time to go home. "We've had a nice time," remarks Appu, little knowing what is in store for them.

As Rajasekhar counts the children when they board the bus, he finds one missing — Vinita. She was last seen in the rose garden, the children tell him. Where has she disappeared? Rajasekhar and some of the boys go in three search parties to comb the garden, park, and the forest area around. There is no trace of the little girl. Rajasekhar stays back to continue the search and sends the others back home with instructions to inform the headmaster, police, and Vinita's mother. Unlike their morning journey full of mirth, the children return sad and silent.

Vinita's mother, Mrs. Panicker, recovers from the initial shock and arranges for a telegram to go to her husband, a Customs official in Bombay. The police are duly alerted, and by the time they all settle down to think of further steps, Rajasekhar comes back. He has drawn a blank.

After a restless night, Appu reaches Pratap's house early next morning. The two are soon joined by Biju. They decide not to sit idle but think of a plan of action. They go to Koickal Palace, where they avoid being seen by their master, headmaster, and

Vinita's mother, besides some policemen. They make their way to another part of the Palace and come across a gateway they had not seen the previous day. They ask the guard to let them in. No, he says, because it is the place which the Maharajah once used as his chamber and it is not open to visitors. According to him, the lock had not been opened for several years!

As the boys leave the place, they notice a bearded visitor to the guard and also overhear a part of their conversation. Apparently, the man, "Anand Sahab", is suspicious about the boys' presence there. Shankar the guard assures him, there is nothing to worry. The three friends also notice that the lock on the entrance is shiny as though it is in use every day.

The owner of the tea shop, where the boys go for a quick bite, does not know much about Anand, except that he is a frequent visitor, and was at the Palace the previous day! The boys repair to the garden where Vinita was last seen. As they comb the area, Pratap picks up a blood-smeared handkerchief from the bushes. From their hiding place, they see the door to the chamber open and Shankar coming from inside! They watch him for a while, and then go back home.

## CHAPTER VI: A Note

PRATAP woke up the next morning with a headache. As he lay in bed, he thought of what they saw at the Koickal Palace the previous day. Everything was interesting, but he wondered whether all that had any bearing on Vinita's mysterious disappearance. He remembered, his two friends had agreed that they would not let anyone else know of what they saw or heard.

An hour later, both Appu and Biju showed up. "Are you going to spend the whole day in bed?" asked Appu. "We've got work to do."

"I was just waiting for you. I stayed in



bed as I had a headache. I'm all right now. Let's go," said Pratap.

They walked towards Vinita's house. There were two cars and a police jeep outside. Also a number of people, including some policemen on the verandah.

"Vinita's father must have arrived," observed Biju. "That accounts for the crowd."

From the verandah they could see Mr. Panicker talking to some people in the drawing room. Appu tried to peep in when a policeman asked him, "What do you want?"

Mr. Panicker seemed to have overheard the policeman. He came out and saw who it was. "Hello, Appu! Come in. Oh, Pratap and Biju, you're also here! Come, sit down."

He then turned to a fair-complexioned man with dark glasses. "They're all Vinu's classmates. Look at them, they're more worried than we are! Poor boys!" He told them, "This

is Mr. Khan, Superintendent of Police."

"Boys, we were classmates, just as you are," said Mr. Khan. "Now, continue with your story, Panicker. I'm going to be here till the Inspector and party come back from the Palace."

Pratap looked around. There were three other men in the room. Two were neighbours, but he did not know the third.

"As I was telling you," said Mr. Panicker, "this antique smuggling must have been going on for sometime. We had some information about a gang, but we didn't have much details. We were really bothered about it when we caught this man last week. We recovered three idols and a lamp from him. They'll be worth several lakhs of rupees."

"Was there only one man in this operation?" asked Mr. Khan.

"No, there must have been others, too.

But we could get only this man in our net. He gave his name as Reddy, but I don't know whether it's his real name. We tried to keep his arrest a secret. But somehow, within hours, we started receiving telephone calls asking about him!"

"The Press people must have come to know," suggested Mr. Khan.

"No, not the Press. The calls actually came from very influential people—they all seemed to be his friends. In fact, someone called even from Delhi, asking me to release him. He was virtually ordering me!"

"Reddy is still in custody, isn't he?" asked Mr. Khan. "Could you get anything further from him?"

"We were interrogating him continuously. But he seemed to be a tough guy. For the first four days, he just refused to open his mouth. He went on saying that he didn't know anything. Finally, on Sunday evening, he broke down. He admitted, he had been in this racket for sometime."

He stopped as Mrs. Panicker just then came in with tea. Her face was swollen and her eyes were red. It was clear she hadn't slept the previous night.

As she served tea, she tried to smile, but it was a feeble attempt. "Please don't worry, Mrs. Panicker," said Mr. Khan, "we'll get Vinita back, wherever she is."

Mrs. Panicker bit her lips in an effort to control her emotions. She then went inside.

Mr. Panicker, sipping from his cup, said, "So, Reddy said he had been running this racket from Bombay. They have their men in Tamilnadu and Kerala. They would steal priceless idols, statues, lamps, artefacts, pottery, and other items and send them to Bombay from where they were smuggled out of the country. Of course, he didn't give out the names of his friends or the exact places of operation. We would have got all the details from him in another day or two. But, then, this telegram arrived and I had to rush home."

"That was a fantastic job, your arresting

this Reddy," said Mr. Khan. "Once the mystery here is solved, you should be able to go back and nab the whole gang."

"Yes, but the immediate problem is finding Vinu. I just can't think why anybody should have kidnapped her."

"No, Panicker, I don't think this is any serious problem. Some prankster must be just trying to get money out of you. Maybe a ransom note is on its way! Once it comes, the rest should be easy. Somehow or other I feel that nothing bad is going to happen."

"But what's the use of our sitting here?" remarked Mr. Panicker. "Shall we go to the Palace and try to figure out things?"

"No, let's wait," said Mr. Khan. "The Inspector, who has gone there, is a smart guy. Let him come back."

Appu got up. "Uncle, we'll come later."

"Okay. If I've any news, I'll certainly let you know," said Mr. Panicker, patting him on the back.

The boys took leave of Mr. Khan and went out.

"What do we do next?" asked Biju.

"Let's go now and meet again after lunch at your place. We can then decide what to do next," said Pratap.

The suggestion was acceptable to the others. As they were walking past the market, someone called from behind. "Appu! Pratap! Come in for a moment."

It was Mr. Vinod, of Vinod Studio, the only photo studio in the village. When the boys went in, he handed them an envelope and said, "These are some snaps of your picnic. Mr. Rajasekhar had left the rolls here and asked me to make prints. He had also asked me to hand them over to one of you, if anyone came this side."

Pratap took the envelope and said, "Thank you, I'll give it to master."

As they walked away, he said, more to himself than to others, "Who wants to see the photographs of that unfortunate picnic?"

"True," said Appu. "I wish I had never



reminded our teacher about the picnic."

They went their way without caring to look at the photos. It so happened that, when Pratap was having his lunch, his sister, Beena, was taking a look at the pictures. "Some of them have come out well," said Beena. "But there is not a single good photograph of you, Pratap! Hey, this one of Vinita is very good. She looks so cute. But who's this man behind her, Pratap?"

"What man?" Pratap called out from the dining table. "There were only three men with us, Mr. Rajasekhar, the peon, and the driver."

"You have a look at it," said Beena and took the photograph to him. Pratap looked at it. Vinita was running after a butterfly and, behind her, at some distance, was a man. He was mostly hidden by the bushes. But his face was partially visible. Wasn't he Anand Saheb, the bearded man whom they saw the previous day talking to Shankar the palace guard?

Pratap was speechless for several minutes. Meanwhile, at the Panickers' residence, he was slowly getting impatient. "It's 2 o'clock. Khan, and the Inspector hasn't come back yet. How long shall we wait?" he asked.

"No, I think we should go to the Palace and try for some clues."

"Okay, let's go," said Khan, getting up. On the veranda, the policeman stood at attention.

"We're going to the Palace. Two of you must be here always. Watch out for anybody moving about in a suspicious manner."

"Yes, sir!" the man saluted, as they went past him.

"Let's go in my car," said Mr. Khan opening the door of his car for Mr. Panicker. "Hey, what's this?" Mr. Khan bent down and picked up an envelope lying on the driver's seat. "This is for you, Panicker," he added, handing it to Mr. Panicker. He then turned to the constable standing nearby. "Who put that in the car?"

"I didn't see, sir. Some boys were standing near the car."

"You ask everybody around and try to find out who could have put it in the car," directed Mr. Khan.

He looked at Mr. Panicker. His face had turned white. "What's the matter?"

Without a word, Mr. Panicker handed the paper in his hand to Mr. Khan. The Superintendent looked at it and read.

**"YOU RELEASE REDDY,  
WE RELEASE VINITA."**

**Radhakrishnan**





Michael Arnold's

# SCIENCE SPOT

## CONTINENTS ON THE MOVE

WHEN the American explorer, Donald Boxter MacMilan, found coal deposits under the snow and ice of northern Canada, he set a puzzle for scientists.

For coal was formed—something like 250,000,000 years ago—from trees and plants growing in warm climates. Boxter's discoveries meant that, at one time, northern Canada was warm—a lot warmer than it is now, at any rate.

But scientists have calculated that if all the ice at the poles melted, the level of the world's oceans would rise by anything from 100 to 250 feet!

And there's no sign that the Earth has ever been without its ice caps, though the size of the caps has varied.

The answer to the problem was provided more than 60 years ago by two geologists, the American, F. B. Taylor, and the German, Alfred Wegener.

Their theory, which they developed independently, was very simple: that the cold bits of the Earth stayed in the same place, but that the land moved around instead.

The theory came to be known as **continental drift**. However, while people could accept the idea that land rises out of the sea or sinks under it, few could accept that it moves about from place to place. The ideas of Taylor and Wegener were laughed out of court.

But in the past 10 or 15 years, those ideas have been accepted—and largely proved, too.

It's plain to see, if you look at a world map, that the bulge of South

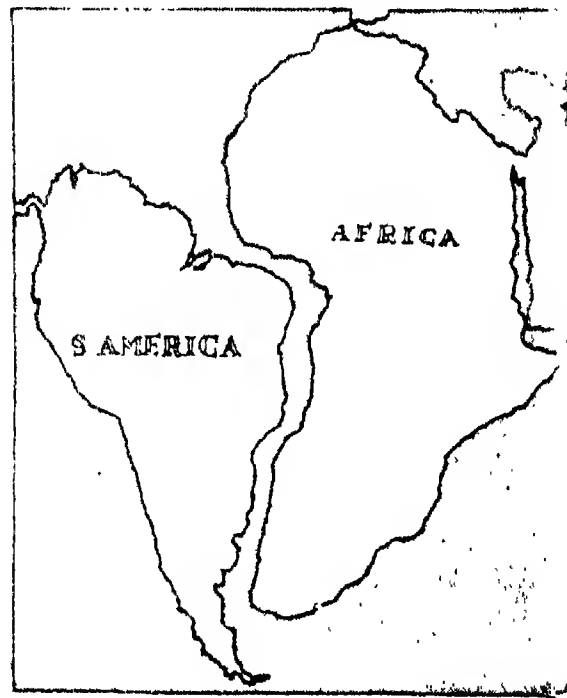
America appears to fit snugly into the corresponding inward curve of Africa, across the Atlantic (see diagram)!

And that is apparently how it must have been at one time.

A long time ago—about 200,000,000 years—it seems there was just one land mass, consisting of North and South America, Europe, Asia, Australia, and Antarctica. Wegener gave the name **Pangaea** to this land mass.

Then Pangaea started to break up. First Europe, Asia, Africa, and North America broke away as a unit. In time, North America split off from Europe-Asia.

If you're still looking at the map and thinking that North America and Europe don't fit together, remember that con-



tinents continue under the sea on what is called **continental shelves**.

The European shelf carries on beyond Ireland, and the North Sea is in fact part of that shelf, not part of the deep oceans.

The remaining section of Pangaea, which is called Gondwanaland by geologists, consisted of Antarctica, South America, Australia, and the Indian subcontinent.

Over millions of years, the continents as we know them split apart. India, 'floated' northward until it collided with the southern part of Asia, pushing up a ridge which we know today as the Himalayas.

Geologists have matched the rocks between western Africa and eastern South America. There are enough similarities to suggest that the two land masses were once one.

Exactly, how do the continents 'float' about? And what do they float on? Scientists are busy trying to work that one out.

The latest theory is that the surface

of the Earth consists of about half-a-dozen comparatively thin 'plates' which float on the mantle, an inner layer of the Earth, which is about 1,800 miles thick.

It is thought that the plates rub against each other along some of their boundaries—and that would account for the earthquake belts.

Deep under the ocean are a number of trenches, particularly on the western side of the Pacific Ocean. Here, geologists surmise, one plate is slipping down under another.

And in the middle of the oceans are ridges where, the theory goes, the plates are being formed and moving outwards away from each other.

So, next time you come off a boat or an aeroplane, and think how nice it is to be back on firm ground again—remember—it's not as firm as you think.

But don't be alarmed; you'd have to live several million years to see much change!

(First Features)



**Ripley's Believe It or Not!**

**STUNTMEN**  
making the movie  
"Smokey and  
the Bandit"  
**WRECKED**  
50 CARS

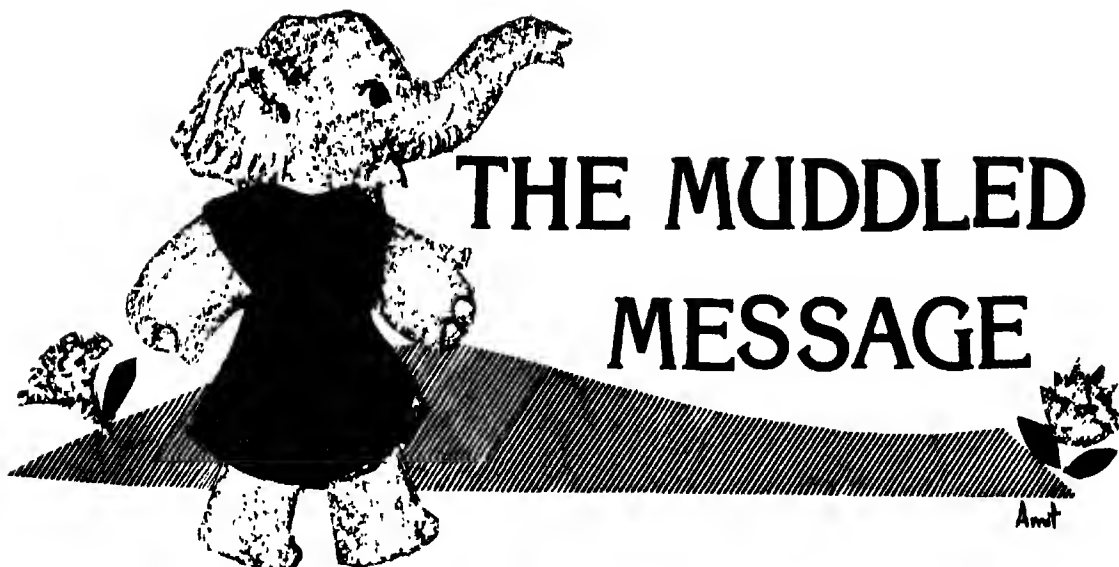
**THE WORLD ENERGY CRISIS**  
According to experts could be solved by the  
year 2025 WITH THE PLACING OF MASSIVE  
**SOLAR POWER SATELLITES IN SPACE.**



**Kathie ACHS**  
of Antioch, Ill.,  
attended  
Antioch  
Community  
High  
School  
Submitted by Mrs. J.T. Mohr  
Lindenhurst, Ill.



**THE MELODIOUS WALL**  
PART OF THE MUSICAL SCORE of Ravel's  
"Gaspard de la Nuit" covers an entire outside  
wall of a Minneapolis, Minn. music store  
Submitted by Tom Higgins, Grahamville, N.Y.



"OH dear, how can I ever get everything organised?" moaned Mama Jumbo, stuffing a lot of paper and packets into a bag.

"Don't worry, Mama, comforted her daughter, little Motirani. "Your Jungle Ladies' Fete will turn out to be a grand success!"

With that Motirani quietly gulped down another banana 'pakora'. It was her tenth one! But, for once, Mama Jumbo did not start lecturing Motirani on 'over-eating'; she was more worried about the Fete.

Indeed, Mama Jumbo bore a tremendous responsibility. She and the other jungle ladies were holding a Grand Fete at the Jungle Park. Tomorrow was the 'great day'—so Mama Jumbo was buried 'trunk-deep' in matters like stalls, games, jumble sales, eats, and such things.

"Motirani, my pet," said Mama Jumbo, "do me a favour. Run along to Beauty Crow's house and tell Aunty to meet me at the park with a sack of potatoes. She's in charge of the chips, y' know."

Mama then hurried towards the door

and said, "I'm going out now. Be a good girl."

"Mm umm," Motirani nodded hastily, to assure her mother that she would do as she was told. Her mouth was still full of 'pakora', so she could not give a proper reply.

While her Mama talked, Motirani had constantly eyed the two 'pakoras' left on the plate. So, the minute Mama left, Motirani made those 'pakoras' do the 'vanishing trick'!

"Now to play," said Motirani happily. Taking her ball, she ran towards her best friend, Chmhi Woodmouse's house. Thought Motirani as she went, 'Chuhi and I'll go together to Aunty Crow's house and give her Mama's message.'

Message?! Oh, gulped Motirani in fright! What exactly was Mama's message for Aunty?

Motirani had been so busy gorging 'pakoras' on the sly that she had not paid attention to what her Mama had said! Now she just could not remember what the message was.

'Greedy ole' pig' Motirani scolded herself. 'Tucking in 'pakoras', instead of



listening properly. Now Mama'll give you a good spanking—and well do von deserve it!

But it was useless chiding oneself. 'Try remembering the message,' Motirani coaxed herself. 'Jog the famous 'Jumbo memory'!'

So Motirani thought HARD—till her brain really whirled—and then she got a clue. Yes, Mama had said something about a sack of tomatoes in the park—no, no, in the dark!

Correct! The message was: "Tell Aunty to see to the sack of tomatoes after dark." Thank goodness, she had remembered it.

True, the message sounded slightly odd. But Motirani at once thought of

an explanation for that.

'Sack of tomatoes after dark must be the fanciful name for some game at the Fete, and Aunty Crow must be in charge of it,' she told herself. 'That's why Mama's message reminds Aunty of her Fete duty.'

Besides, Motirani remembered her mother mentioning something about 'chips'. And weren't 'chips', 'dice', and 'tickets' all connected with Fete games?

Motirani felt much happier after solving the tricky 'message problem'. She was just making her way to Chuhi's house, when who should come down the road but Aunty's son Sundar Crow?

Motirani at once gave Sundar the message for his mother. She made him

repeat it so that he wouldn't forget it! And then off she went to play.

She spent the morning merrily, playing with her three best friends, Chuhi Woodmouse, Phudak Sparrow, and Gilloo Squirrel.

When she got home at lunch time, she informed her Mama that the message had been safely delivered.

"Oh, it's all right," laughed Mama Jumbo, "I met Aunty Crow at the market and talked things over with her myself."

Motirani did feel relieved to hear this.

Actually, she had a teeny-weeny doubt that she might have made some mistake with the message. But that did not matter now.

Next morning, a most unexpected visitor arrived.

It was Beauty Crow. She was cawing in a most delighted and happy manner.

Mama Jumbo welcomed her guest. "Hope the potatoes. . .?" she began to question nervously.

"Don't worry about that, Mrs. Jumbo," interrupted Beauty Crow. "I came along just to say 'thank you!' to your



brilliant little Motirani. And this cake is a special gift for her."

With that Beauty Crow deposited an enormous 'tender green-leaf' cake on the table.

Mama Jumbo was so surprised, she didn't know what to say!

"What an intelligent daughter you have, Mrs. Jumbo," gushed on Beauty Crow. "It was only due to her message—"See to the sack of tomatoes after dark"—that I was able to catch that thief, Moolchand Mole, red-handed! Imagine! He came to pilfer my prize tomatoes. The ones I'd reserved for the vegetable show at the Fete today. Ha! ha! Moolchand thought he'd steal my tomatoes and win the first prize. Now he's in jail and my tomatoes are safe!"

"But I can't understand it," exclaimed Mama Jumbo. "I sent you a message about the potatoes for the chips—nothing about your tomatoes!"

Poor Motirani was about to confess that she had jumbled up the message and created the confusion. But the chatter-box Aunt Crow was hardly listening to Mama Jumbo's words.

"That's it," she jabbered. "Motirani's message about tomatoes puzzled me terribly—till I remembered my prize tomatoes! So last night, I secretly stood guarding my vegetable patch. The moment that sneak Moolchand set his thieving fingers on my tomatoes, I pounced on him and nipped his mischief in the bud!" laughed Beauty Crow.

"You're a genius!" Aunt crowed on, raising the dumbstruck Motirani. "Your message was perfect! Moolchand even carried a sack. 'Sack of tomatoes after dark'—indeed! How cute! What astound-

ing brains!"

Motirani now understood it all! By a stroke of luck, her muddled up message about 'tomatoes' had helped Aunt Crow catch a thief. And now, she really believed that Motirani had very smartly sent that peculiar message just to trap the thief!

But Mama Jumbo still found the whole thing very perplexing. "How did you come to know that Moolchand Mole was planning to steal Aunt's tomatoes?" she asked Motirani.

"Er...um," Motirani stuttered helplessly, wondering if she'd have to tell the truth after all.

But luckily, the talkative Aunt Crow came to her rescue. "Oh Mrs. Jumbo, don't you know that children are much more observant than we grown-ups?" interrupted Aunt Crow at once. "Motirani must have noticed something—that's why she sent that timely warning so cleverly! Isn't that so, dearie?"

"Hm.," Motirani smiled sheepishly.

The situation was really getting awkward. It was so embarrassing hearing Aunt Crow shower praises on her—praises that she actually didn't deserve!

So, before Mama Jumbo could ask any more questions, Motirani cut four huge slices of the lovely cake and ran out to meet her best pals.

Her muddled message had indeed led to a rare muddle! But, 'All's well that ends well'. The wicked thief had been caught, and Motirani and her friends were enjoying a most delicious cake!

S. Banerjee



## Wishes and Sausages

**L**ONG, long ago in France there lived many wealthy noble families in palatial mansions and chateaux. This is the story of a scullery maid and a stable boy who worked for one such rich family.

Those were the days when fairies appeared before people and granted them wishes. Well, it was New Year's Eve and there was this poor scullery maid, Pierrette, and her husband, Henri, who was the noble man's stable boy. Their master and mistress were out celebrating New Year's Eve at a gala ball that night.

Henri and Pierrette were both sulking as they had no money to go out and celebrate. Both of them were greedy

and extravagant and never saved a franc and were now grumbling about their penniless state.

They sat in their room by the fire envying their rich master and mistress. "If only we were rich like them. . . . oh, if only I had lovely silk and satin dresses and diamond tiaras. How heavenly it must be to dance all night wearing them!" sighed Pierrette.

"Did you see master's silk shirt and necktie? My! they must be enjoying the sumptuous feast now, delicious cakes, and wines . . . it was not our lot to be born rich," moaned Henri.

It so chanced that a kind fairy flitting by heard them. She flew in and, appearing before Henri and Pierrette,

said, "I couldn't help overhearing. I shall help you. Do not despair. You may have three wishes between the two of you, but beware, think wisely and wish, for, the moment you've wished thrice, this power that I grant you will fade away in a trice." She waved her silver wand thrice and vanished "Pouf" in a second, into the blue.

"Henri, did you see and hear that? Are we dreaming?" asked Pierrette.

"No, we both saw and heard the fairy," said Henri rubbing his hands and dancing a jig in glee. "We are on our way to becoming the wealthiest couple in all France . . . hurrah!" he cried excitedly.

"Be quiet, man. I'll do the wishing. I know just what we want. Once we become rich we would never have to spend an unhappy day for the rest of our lives," said Pierrette.

Henri paused for a moment and said, "Just getting rich alone won't do, we'll have to ask for a long healthy life also to enjoy it. Besides we need strength in case thieves attack us to steal our riches."

Pierrette laughed at him and said, "What a nitwit! If we're rich, we can afford to have guards to keep watch over our fabulous estates. The way you're rattling on, it seems three wishes won't do. We may need ten at least!"

"Cava, cava, let's not waste any more time but put our heads together and think carefully. Brr . . . brr . . . it's so cold, shut that window and stir up the fire, woman. It's almost dying out," said Henri drawing his rickety old chair closer to the table near the hearth.

Pierrette took the poker, stirred the dying embers back to life, and added a few more logs to the leaping flames. "There! it's warm and cozy now . . . Oh! how I wish we had a string of sausages

to cook over it . . . nothing like sizzling juicy sausages to eat on a cold winter's night."

Hardly had Pierrette turned round when, from out of nowhere, a string of fat succulent sausages fell on the table with a loud 'plop'!

Henri at once realised what had happened. "You wretched fool of a woman, you could not contain your tongue. Now we have only two wishes left. You didn't even wait for me to decide before you opened your big mouth. I wish those sausages get stuck to your nose."

And so the second wish was also granted! Helas!

"Henri! Look what you've done to me, you cruel man!" sobbed Pierrette.

"Let me see if I can pull it off," said Henri pulling and tugging at the long string and almost tripping over it in the process. "Ouch! You're hurting me, stop it, my poor nose . . . oooh . . ." screamed Pierrette.

So there they sat dazed, awhile in a fix. "I'm sorry, Pierrette, in my anger I wished it because you spoiled the first wish," apologised Henri.

"I'll use the last one to make us rich. This is our only chance, and then I'll make a golden veil for you to cover your face and no one will ever see your nose," said Henri generously.

"No. You can't do that. If you do I'll kill myself here and now," screamed Pierrette clutching the kitchen knife.

Henri rushed forward and grabbed the knife from her. He sincerely loved his wife, for, she was at heart a good woman, though she often lost her temper with him. "The last wish I leave for you, dear Pierrette. Use it as you choose," said Henri.

And Pierrette shut her eyes tightly and wished. "I wish that these sausages be taken off my nose!" And promptly





they dropped off. Plouk!

They both realised that the fairy had indeed taught them a valuable lesson.

"At least we can enjoy these juicy sausages now," said Pierrette, serving them sizzling hot from the pan to Henri and herself.

And so Pierrette and Henri sat down to a hearty supper and joyfully accepted the fact that people are what they are, and it doesn't pay to sulk or be greedy

Lalita Nayar

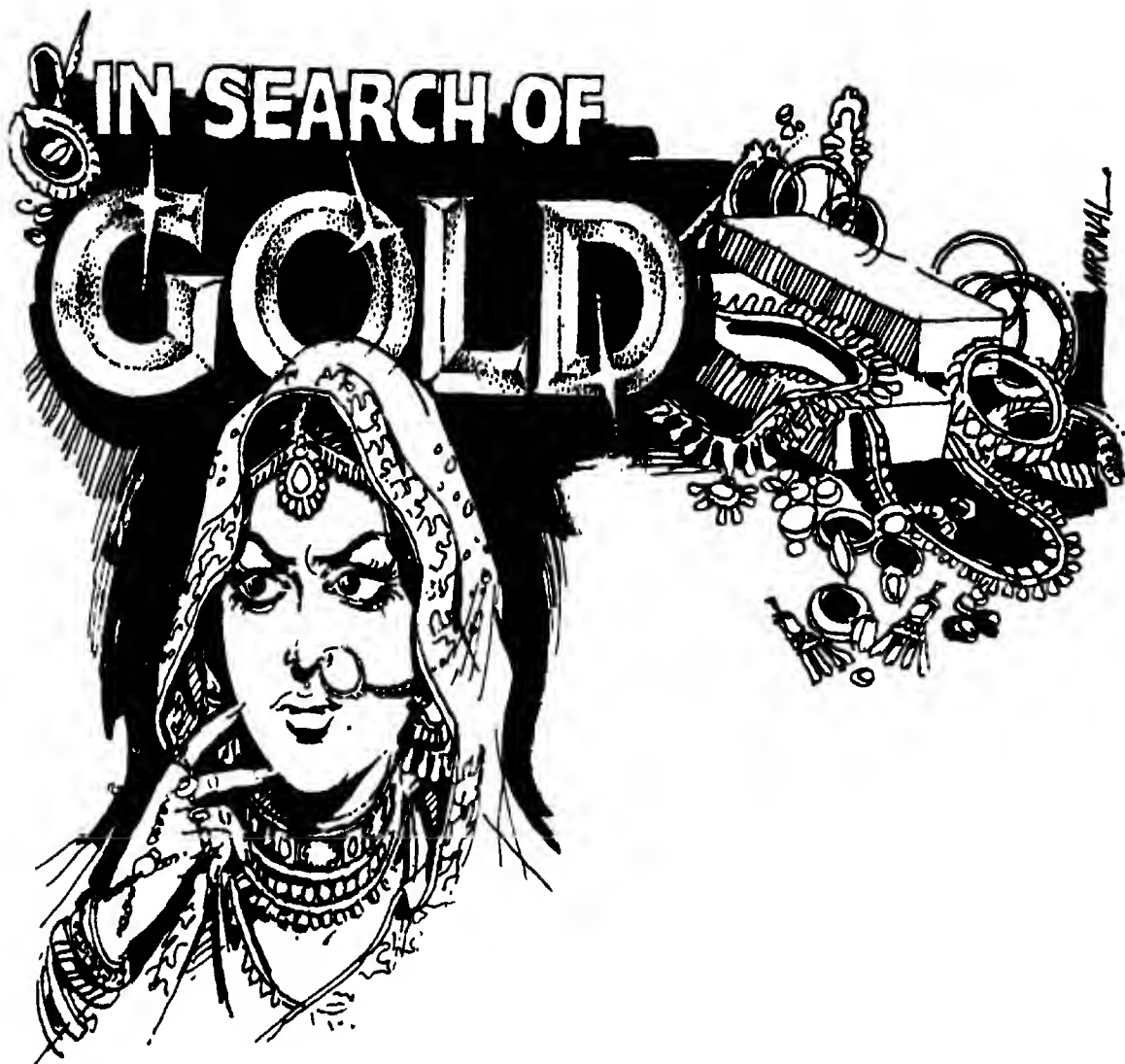
**Ridley's** **Believe It or Not!**

**NATIVES**  
of Chimbu New Guinea, pierce their noses with quills from a fierce fighting bird, paint red around their eyes to look like an angry black cat, and frame their jaws with mother of pearl shells **TO SHOW THEIR WEALTH AND PROWESS IN BATTLE!**

**MOVIE STUNTS**  
between 1925 and 1930 caused the injury of more than 10,000 performers — with **55 OF THEM KILLED**

**TELLING OFF WILLIAM TELL**  
BARNABY RUHE of New York City at a Smithsonian Institution Boomerang Tournament in Washington, D.C., on June 12, 1982, balanced an apple on his own head, he then hurled a lead-weighted boomerang out in front of him which traveled 251.32 meters (824.6 ft) to return and **CHOP OFF THE APPLE!**

**METHIONYLGLUT**  
An Enzyme for tryptophan synthetase A protein, containing 267 amino acids, has a chemical name of **1,913 LETTERS**  
Submitted by Carl Rennhack, Boston, Mass



**B**EGUM SAHIBA SHAUKAT JAHAN came from a distinguished family of Oudh. Her father had owned a palatial house and a large tract of land near Lucknow. As she was the only child of her parents, when they passed away, both the house and land came to her.

Begum Sahiba moved into the house with her husband, Mirza Abdul Latif. People eyed them enviously, and Mirza Sahib himself often said with great humility, "How lucky we are!" But Begum Sahiba was not happy. She had inherited the house and land all right, but she knew it for a fact that her parents had also a lot of gold. What happened to all

that gold? It was not in the house. Neither had her parents said anything about it before they died. Where was the gold?

Begum Sahiba discussed the matter with her husband. But he was a contented man. "For heaven's sake, Begum," he told her, "don't you have enough? You got such a lot of gold for your wedding. Must you have more?"

But Begum Sahiba simply couldn't put the gold out of her head. Night and day she dreamt of it. And she made up her mind not to rest till she had found it.

She began by searching through the house all over again. She searched in

her parents' iron safe. She searched through their boxes and cupboards. She tapped the floors. She tapped every wall to see if there was a hollow space anywhere. She combed out the store room, the outhouses, the stables. Not a trace of the gold did she find.

However, Begum Sahiba was not one to give up. She sought the advice of her friends. "What do you think might have happened to the gold?" she asked them.

"Isn't it possible," said one of them, "that your father gave away the gold to his own brothers and sisters? After all, he had set aside the house and all the land for you."

Begum Sahiba shook her head. "My father had no brothers or sisters."

"Well, then, he might have disposed off the gold and given the money to the

poor," suggested another woman.

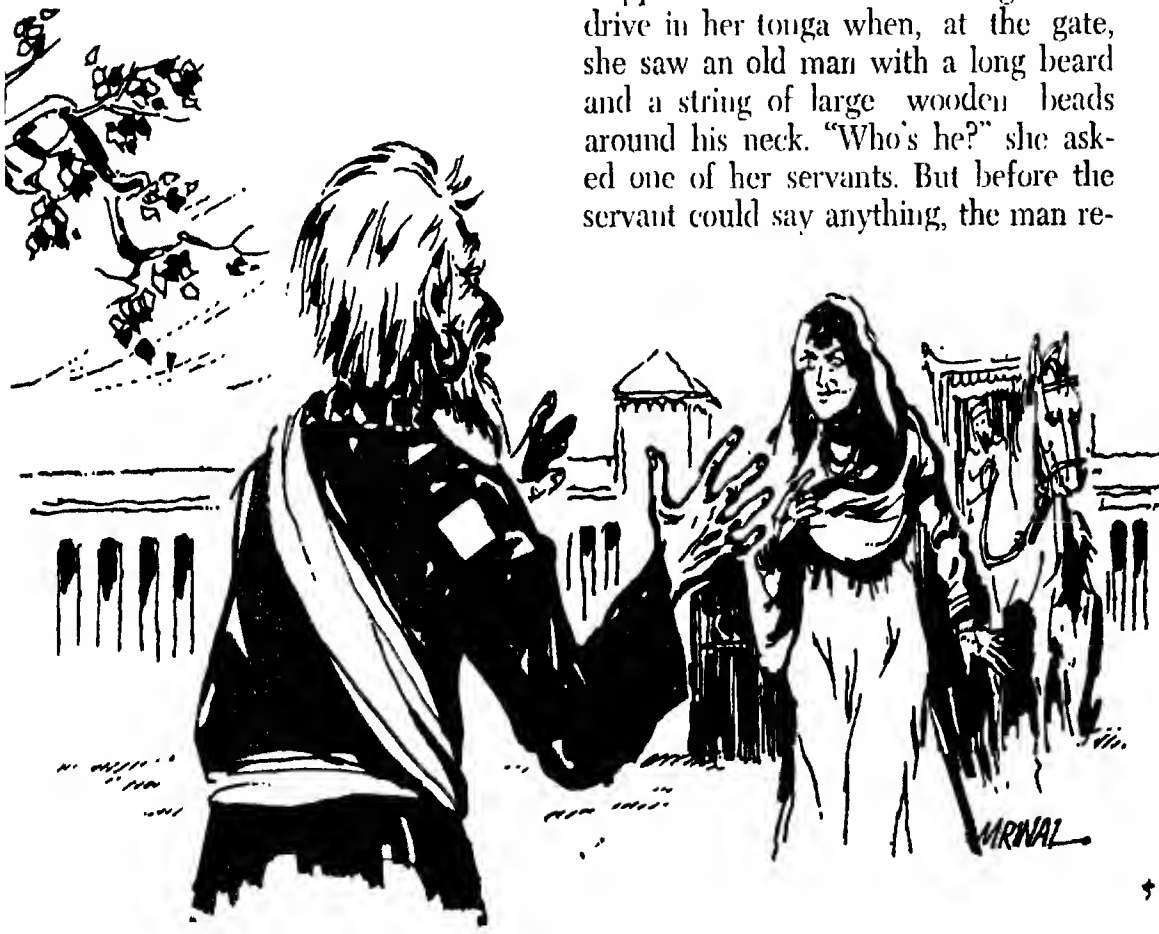
"Impossible!" returned Begum Sahiba. "Dispose off the gold? No, he cared so much for it. He wouldn't entrust it to anyone, but always kept it in the house."

"For all you know, he might have sold the gold for some ready cash he was in dire need of. Maybe, he was too proud to tell you about it . . ." a third woman hazarded a guess.

At this, Begum Sahiba faltered a little but she still wasn't convinced. "My mother would have told me," she cried. "At least I think so . . . No! I've a feeling that the gold is still somewhere in the house . . ."

"Then keep looking," said the friends. And Begum Sahiba kept looking.

One day, Begum Sahiba had just stepped out of the house to go for a drive in her tonga when, at the gate, she saw an old man with a long beard and a string of large wooden beads around his neck. "Who's he?" she asked one of her servants. But before the servant could say anything, the man re-



plied, "I'm a gypsy."

Begum Sahiba got into the tonga. "We don't want any gypsies about the place," she said curtly. "Go away!"

But the man made no attempt to move. Staring at Begum Sahiba with his coal-black eyes he said, "Don't make that mistake. I can see that you are looking for something. And I, and only I, can find it for you!"

"Oh, can you, indeed?" cried Begum Sahiba, beside herself with joy. She nearly jumped out of the tonga and took the man inside the house. She plied him with sweets and fruit and a glass of her famous 'badam ka sharbat'. As he ate and drank, out came the story of the missing gold.

The old man listened most attentively, nodding from time to time. When the story was finished, he closed his eyes and seemed to withdraw into himself for almost half-an-hour. At last he opened his eyes and said in a deep voice, "The stars have spoken. Your gold will be found. But you must do exactly as I say. Failing that, you stand to lose all that you have at the moment. I shall leave now. But wait for me at dawn tomorrow morning."

The man left. Begum Sahiba was ready to dance for joy, but her husband was far from happy. "Why must you hanker after gold all the time?" he chided her.

"That gold is mine," returned his wife. "And why should I give up what is mine?"

Came morning and the man was at the door, clad in a long black robe, his face calm but purposeful. The moment he entered, he said, "I have a few questions to ask. First, in which room was the gold kept when your father was alive?"

"In his bedroom."

"In what shape was the gold?"

"There were two bars, a lot of coins, and some ornaments."

"When did you last see them?"

"Shortly before my wedding. My parents gave me some of the ornaments as a gift."

"Good," said the gypsy, with obvious satisfaction. "Now take out everything from your father's bedroom. Leave only the four walls. I'll sit there to work my magic. Next, collect all the gold ornaments you have, stitch them in a bundle, and keep them ready."

At this Begum Sahiba was a little surprised. "My gold ornaments? But why?"

The man's eyes flashed. "How ignorant you are!" he snapped. "Don't you know that gold attracts gold? The more gold you put into the bundle, the more power will it have to attract the gold that is missing!"

Begum Sahiba did as she was told. Next morning, the gypsy came again. He stood in the empty room and surveyed it, nodding in approval. Next he asked for a spade. Drawing a circle on the floor with a lump of charcoal, he dug within it to make a fairly large hole.

When the mud and pieces of brick had been cleared away, the old man sat down near the hole. He looked at Begum Sahiba and said, "The gold is still in this room or very near it. Now we shall put your ornaments at the bottom of this hole. At dawn, for seven days, I shall sit near the hole and work my magic. At the end of the seven days, the hole will fill up with the missing gold!"

The gypsy went on. "I don't wish to touch your ornaments. Nor do I wish to be left alone with them in this room. You must always be here to watch over your gold."

Begum Sahiba smiled. At last she had found an honest man!

The gypsy put his hand inside his robe and took out a square piece of green cloth. "Here," he said, "tie up your ornaments in this and bring them here."

The gypsy did not touch the green bundle. Instead, he asked Begum Sahiba herself to keep it at the bottom of the hole. Next, he took out some cowries, an amulet made of iron, and a jet black stick. These he arranged on the floor in front of him, closed his eyes,



and sat cross-legged for almost an hour muttering under his breath.

Exactly the same thing happened every day. The gypsy came at dawn and Begum Sahiba led him to the room. He took out the cowries and other paraphernalia from within the folds of his robe, arranged them on the floor, closed his eyes, and chanted his magic spells. Not once did he touch Begum Sahiba's bundle of ornaments. Not once did Begum Sahiba leave him alone in the room. After the gypsy had left, Begum Sahiba herself locked the room, and the key hung from a chain around her neck.

Six days came and went. On the seventh day, the gypsy arrived a little late. Begum Sahiba was slowly getting frantic. So she ran to meet him at the gate, wild with joy. But she noticed that there were dark shadows under his eyes and he looked quite exhausted. He told Begum Sahiba, "I've been up all night. There's a curse on the gold and the curse keeps pulling it back all the time, do what I may. But today my magic must work."

He sat down. From the folds of his robe, he took out a small earthen platter into which he put a little black powder, lighting it with a match. Soon a thin smoke began to rise from the platter, just as the gypsy closed his eyes and began to chant his spells.

After a while a change came over the gypsy. His face began to turn red. Drops of perspiration glistened on his forehead. Slowly these began to trickle down as the gypsy screwed up his face looking for all the world as if he were pulling something very heavy. Once or twice he groaned and then, suddenly, he fell to the ground crying, "Water! Water!"

Begum Sahiba ran to the door, and called out to a servant to fetch a glass

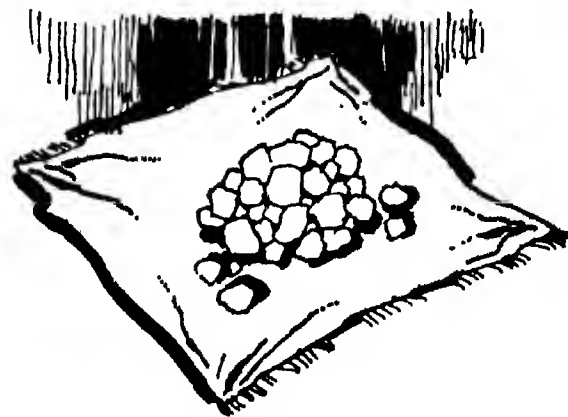
of water. The gypsy took a little water and seemed to feel better. He muttered a few more spells and stood up shakily. "Daughter," he said to Begum Sahiba, "I've done all I could. Lock this room and wait for one more day. By tomorrow morning, the hole will have been filled up with gold."

Begum Sahiba was too overcome to say much. She tried to give the gypsy some silver coins for his pains, but he firmly turned down the offer. Picking up his things, he glided out of the house, silent as a shadow.

That day Begum Sahiba could think of nothing but gold, gold and gold. She didn't sleep at all. Early next morning, she opened the room and ran to the hole, but it stared back at her, empty, save for the green bundle. She lifted the bundle and opened it. Lo and behold! Her own ornaments had vanished; there were only some small stones in their place.

Begum Sahiba broke down. She sat on the floor and wept her heart out. Mirza Abdul Latif tried to console her, asking her to be content with whatever she had. She agreed with her husband, but could not help looking out for the gypsy whenever she went out for a drive in her tonga.

Pratibha Nath





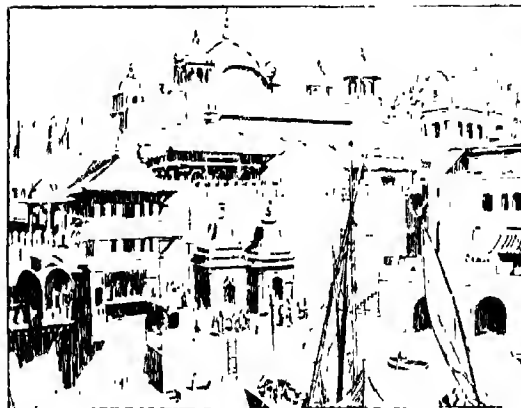
**Our Story:** THE NEWS CANNOT BE BROKEN GENTLY. ARN EXPLAINS TO MATTHIAS AND JUDITH THAT THE CHILD THEY HAVE RAISED AS THEIR OWN IS IN TRUTH HIS OWN BROTHER. HE DESCRIBES THEIR CHANCE MEETING WITH PRIAM AT THE BAZAAR WHEN THE BOY WAS GIVEN AWAY. THERE IS NO CHANCE OF ERROR. HUSBAND AND WIFE ERUPT IN HELPLESS ANGER. "DID YOU HAVE A SON NATHAN?" MATTHIAS ASKS.



"JUST TO TAKE HIM FROM US?" SHOULD WE FATTEN HIM FOR YOU FIRST?" AND ARN SAYS QUIETLY, "ALL OF YOU WOULD BE WELL COME IN OUR HOUSEHOLD."



MATTHIAS AND JUDITH NEED TIME TO ALLEVIATE THEIR FEELINGS. AND, AS HER WORK WOULD BE DONE, ARN LEAVES THE NEXT MORNING, PROMISING TO RETURN. HE INSISTS THAT THE FAMILY WILL NOT FLEE. HE HAS A DEED TO DO. ABOARD A SHIP HE BEGINS THE LONG JOURNEY DOWN THE TIGRIS TO IMPERIAL BABYLON.



ON HIS WAY HEAR TO BABYLON, HERE KHOSRU THE PERSIAN KING KEEPS READY THREE THRONES NEXT TO HIS OWN FOR THE KHAN OF CATHAY, THE EMPEROR OF ROME, AND THE TRIBE OF THE ASIAN NOMADS--IN CASE THEY SHOULD EVER VISIT. HERE PRINCE ARN BRINGS EZEKIEL'S BOOK, KEEPING HIS PROMISE TO THE DYING RABBI.



THE RABBI IS ACCEPTED, SAVING ONE SMALL ADDITION TO A GREAT WORKING FORCE. BEING AN ARN, EZEKIEL THE RABBI REMOVES THE MEZUZAH IN THE BABYLONIAN HOME.



MANY WEEKS HAVE PASSED BEFORE ARN AGAIN SETS EYES ON HIS BROTHER. JUDITH AND MATTHIAS HAVE MADE A DECISION. IT'S EASIER TO ABANDON A FATHER THAN TO ABANDON A SON. JUDITH SAYS SHE HAS SWEEPED THE FINE HOUSE CLEAN AND LEFT BREAD AND SALT UPON THE TABLE. FROM THE CORRIDOR MATTHIAS HAS REMOVED THE MEZUZAH. THEY ARE READY TO GO.





THE LONG JOURNEY FROM THE INTERIOR IS UNHINDERED BY JUSTINIAN'S PATROLS FOR THE INVADING PERSIANS HAVE TIED DOWN THE IMPERIAL ARMY. THE LAST LEG IS THE PASSAGE OVER OPEN SEA, BUT EVEN FISHING BOATS HAVE BEEN PRESSED INTO SERVICE BY THE ADMIRALS. ARN IS UNDAUNTED. BY A LONELY COVE NEAR ANTIOCH HE FINDS WHAT HE IS LOOKING FOR: SMUGGLERS.

"WHY SHOULD I BRING YOU TO THE MISTY ISLES?" THE RINGLEADER ASKS EVILLY. "WHEN I CAN HOLD YOU ALL FOR RANSOM?" ARN RETURNS THE SMILE. "BECAUSE," HE SAYS,



"YOU DO NOT WANT YOUR ARM BROKEN IN FIVE PLACES. AND WHEN WE ARRIVE, I WILL LET YOU SELL YOUR SMUGGLED GOODS AT MARKET WITHOUT TAX."



UPON LEARNING THAT ARN'S MOTHER IS THE QUEEN, THE CAPTAIN AGREES. AND SO IT HAPPENS THAT A STRAY SHIP APPEARS BEYOND THE MOLE. BY THE SAIL ALETA'S COMMANDERS KNOW IT IS A CORSAIR SHIP AND MOVE OUT TO INTERCEPT. MOMENTS AFTER CONTACT THE SWIFTEST VESSEL RACES BACK TO PORT WITH JOYOUS NEWS.



... AND PRECIOUS CARGO, THE CRIES OF THE TOWNSPEOPLE FILTER UP TO THE PALACE WINDOWS. "PRINCE ARN RETURNS!" VAL AND ALETA RACE OUTSIDE.

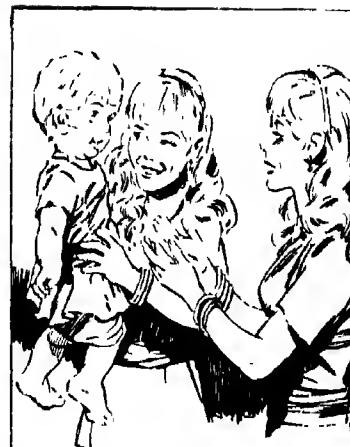


ARN IS IGNORED BY EVERYONE. THE FAMILY HAS EYES ONLY FOR THE RED-HAIRED BUNDLE IN JUDITH'S ARMS. NEPVOUSLY QUEEN ALETA REACHES FOR THE BOY, BUT HE CLINGS TO JUDITH. "HIS NAME IS NATHAN," ARN SAYS. "FOR THE MOMENT," IS ALETA'S CURT REPLY. JUDITH AND THE QUEEN FIX EACH OTHER WITH ICY STARES. THEY ARE GIRDING FOR BATTLE.





IN THE BLISS OF A FAMILY REUNION ALETA DROWNS HER ENVY. SHE IS GRATEFUL TO JUDITH AND MATTHIAS FOR THE GREAT SACRIFICE THEY HAVE MADE, AND JUDITH IS TAKEN ON AS NATHAN'S NURSE. PRINCE VALIANT OFFERS HER HUSBAND A COMFORTABLE POSITION IN THE PALACE BUT MATTHIAS DEMURS. "I WORK THE SOIL," HE SAYS. VAL SURPRISES THE COUPLE WITH THE GIFT OF A NEARBY FARM.



YOUNG NATHAN IS DELIGHTED WITH HIS BROTHER AND SISTERS AND FEELS SECURE IN HIS FATHER'S CALLOUSED HANDS SO MUCH COMPANY IS NOVEL INDEED



BUT EACH TIME THE BOY LEAVES JUDITH'S ARMS FOR HIS MOTHER'S HE SCREAMS WITH DISPLEASURE ALETA HAD DECIDED BEFORE THE CHILD WAS BORN THAT A SON WOULD BE CALLED EGIL AND SHE INSISTS THAT THE HOUSEHOLD USE THAT NAME. BUT TO NATHAN "EGIL" IS JUST A FUNNY SOUND HE NEVER LOOKS UP.



OVER THE WEEKS ALETA'S TEMPER WORSENS ONCE A LADY IS BROUGHT BEFORE HER ACCUSED OF STEALING A PIE FROM THE PALACE PANTRY SHE SENTENCES HIM TO 20 YEARS HARD LABOR IN THE COPPER MINES. AFTER THEY LEAVE THE ROYAL PRESENCE, THE BAILIFF REDUCES THE PENALTY TO A BRISK SPANKING



EVERY MORNING THE QUEEN SPENDS SEVERAL HOURS WITH HER SON EVERY MORNING THE BOY LOSES INTEREST IN HIS MOTHER'S GAMES AND CRAWLS OFF TO PLAY BY HIMSELF. ONE DAY, RESIGNED TO HER UNPOPULARITY, SHE LETS HIM BE AND TAKES UP THE AFFAIRS OF STATE

A FEW MINUTES LATER THERE IS A LOUD CRASH AND ALETA WATCHES IN HORROR AS NATHAN REACHES FOR THE PRETTY COALS. "EGIL!" SHE CRIES THE BOY IGNORES HER



"NATHAN, NO!" JUDITH HAD COME RUNNING AT THE SOUND. NATHAN STOPS IN HIS TRACKS. HE TURNS HIS HEAD AND SMILES. "MOMMA," HE GURGLES.



A CONTENTED STOMACH MAKETH FOR A CONTENTED MAN, AND PRINCE VALIANT'S GRUMBLES IRRITABLY-- THREE COOKS HAVE LEFT. AN ANGRY ALETA HAS THROWN THE PALACE INTO TURMOIL. ARGUMENTS FLARE AND FISTS FLY OVER TRIFLES. ARN TWINKLES WITH GUILTY RELIEF AT THE MESSAGE FROM SIR GAWAIN IN CAMELOT.



"THE SUCCESS OF YOUR QUEST GRATIFIES KING ARTHUR. YOUR PRESENCE IS ORDERED AND COMMANDED," ARN PUFFS WITH VAGUE EXPECTATION.



THAT SAME DAY MATTHIAS ARRIVES WITH SOME CURIOUS BAGGAGE, "CAUGHT HIM POACHING," BUT VAL, EXAMINING THE FINELY CRAFTED BOW THINKS NOT. "NOT POACHING, MATTHIAS, BUT PRACTICING I SMELL A TOURNAMENT," HE REACHES FOR THE BOW...

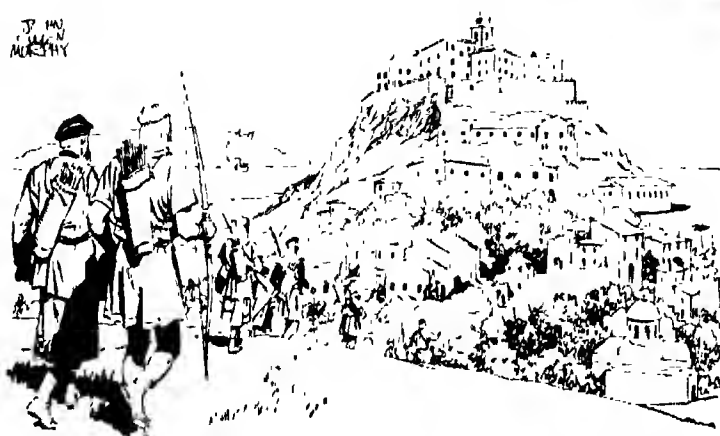


... THEN NODS TO A MARK IN THE FAR DISTANCE "THE KNOT ON YON OLIVE TREE," HE DECLARES. AFTER A RESONANT TWANG THE ARROW SLAMS HOME.

MATTHIAS APPLAUDS QUIETLY "YOU REMIND ME, 'JR, OF RABBI EZEKIEL'S WORDS 'CONFIDENCE IS MERELY BOASTFULNESS SEEN IN HINDSIGHT.'"



VAL IS NOT SURE HE WOULD HAVE LIKED THIS EZEKIEL. WHEN THE BOY IS CUT LOOSE HE GIVES HIS NAME AS ALP ARSLAN.



"YOU WERE RIGHT, MY LORD," HE SAYS. "KING ZOG OF DALMATIA HOSTS A TOURNEY FOR TEAMS OF TWO, BUT MY PARTNER WAS CAUGHT FISHING ON ROYAL LANDS, AND THE QUEEN" HE SPITS BITTERLY "SENTENCED HIM TO A MONTH CLEANING STABLES. NOW I HAVE NO CHANCE AT THE PRIZE" VAL LICKS HIS LIPS. "TELL ME MORE," HE SAYS

(TO BE CONTINUED)



TARA knew even before it happened that it would happen, and it did. It was Saturday—a day off from school and for the boys, too. But her father and mother had to go to their respective offices. That was something she hated about weekends, except for the second Saturday weekend when all of them could be together.

Today, as the time crept towards

nine, Tara caught her mother glancing at the clock, followed by a quick guilty look at the room which lay in total disorder. Then her mother's eyes came to rest on her. Tara tried to concentrate on the last bit of sandwich on her plate, hoping she would not say what Tara expected her to say.

"Tara dear," began her mother and numbed on to say what she knew from experience. "I just have to leave now or else I'll miss my bus. Could you—could you please clean up this mess—and oh yes—there are the beds to be made and the dishes to be washed if the maid doesn't turn up again." She got up from the table and gathered her bag and files together. "I don't know why Saturdays always seem so disorderly. The rest of the week is fine. I manage to get everything done before I leave for work. I can't understand what's happened to the maid today."

She glanced at herself in the mirror above the washbasin and patted her hair. "Don't bother about lunch, dear. If the maid comes, make her cook something. If not, let's see. Maybe we could go out somewhere when I get back. I have a half-day. Look after yourself and the boys."

With a wave of her hand, Ma was gone, and Tara was left to face the assortment of crockery left on the table and the prospect of other little chores ahead. Beyond the half-open door, she could see the boys' beds, all a tangled mess of bedsheets and books and socks,

with the front tip of a toy airplane sticking out of the 'disaster'.

Tara's heart sank at the thought of grappling with all those sheets, literally trying to spank the room into a neat livable state (though she wished she could spank the boys themselves, instead), putting all those books and toys back on their shelves, only to have the whole lot strewn all over the room as soon as her two brothers were home again.

An hour-and-a-half went by. Spurred on by an almost martyr-like acceptance of a spoilt Saturday, Tara had worked like a fiend. Now the boys' room looked and felt like a lull between storms—the boys themselves had disappeared after breakfast and hadn't shown up since. Tara reflected moodily on the meanmy knack they had of never being around when there was work to be done. To be sure, they'd turn up at lunch time, ravenous and clamoring for their meal and complaining if it was delayed.

The maid hadn't come till then, which meant she wouldn't come at all. Tara had mentally shaken her fist at the errant woman and gone on to ease her annoyance by beating about at the dust with a lot of unnecessary noise and fervour.

Then there was her parents' room too, which needed some straightening up.

Tara gave the counterpane one last tweak and went up to the dining table where she sat down with a big bump and surveyed the house or as much of it as she could see from where she sat. The house looked cool and silent, on that drowsy spring morning. But Tara was oblivious of it all. All she could see before her and behind her were the chores and the odd jobs—heaps and

piles of, 'Please-help-me-with-this-dear', 'Will-ya-do-this?' and 'That's-a-nice-girls'. How tired she was of it all!

The burning hot tears combed down her cheeks and she choked over her sobs. What she was crying about and who she was really angry at, she did not stop to think. She only knew that it was a kind of mixed anger at the boys for their callousness at Ma for working her like a slave-driver and at the maid for not turning up that day and ruining her weekend. Even at Papa for having so innocently remarked once, "So, my daughter's learning to be a homemaker?"

How she hated at that moment all the unmade beds, the used plates, the greasy dishes in the sink and the layers of dust that lay everywhere as though to trap her and, between them all, to swallow up the hours which she felt she was privileged to use as she pleased, because after all it was her life and her time. She thought longingly of what her classmates often spoke of—the family gatherings, the cousins, the servants who obligingly took care of all the nagging details, so that life became one easy, enjoyable affair.

She shook back her thick dark hair and thought deeply about it. No it was not that they were so different from other families. Except that Ma went for work. She had always worked, but when Tara and the boys had been younger, their grandmother had been alive and ever willing to look after the children. Then had come an increasing succession of ayahs and maids—none of whom had been particularly suited to their household, for their family had some special needs. Ma could not always be at home when the children were. So, they all lived from day to day, month to month, all pitching in to do their bit

(except for the boys, Tara thought morosely).

She looked at the clock on the shelf. It was eleven thirty. Another two hours to go before Ma returned. She decided to stroll outside. Finny she hadn't noticed it before, but it was a heavenly day, still cool with little breezes blowing. She picked up the door key and left by the back door. A tiny gust of wind tossed her hair and followed her as she turned the corner. She wondered where the boys had got to – probably making paper planes, she guessed and floating them down from the hillock on that empty plot. Or making Chinese kites, their latest obsession.

As she passed by their neighbours' hedge, a voice hailed her. She peeped over the hedge to see Mr. Singh, their neighbour, engrossed as usual in his garden. He waved a hoe at her cheerfully. "Come in, my dear girl!"

She debated for a moment and then turned in at the rickety gate. She had not gone in there very often. "How are you, Uncle?"

"Busy as usual, *bete*. See – see the results of all my hard work!" He waved a hand around and her glance followed, taking in the sprawling beds of colourful flowers. Flowers that seemed to nod, dance, sway, and sing in the spring breeze.

Finny, thought Tara. Coming to think of it, flowers really seemed to be much happier in Mr. Singh's garden than she had ever seen them elsewhere. It was difficult to describe, but flowers really seemed to bloom for all they were worth. She had never seen such massive blooms, except at the flower shows where Ma had taken her a few times.

"Uncle, it's lovely, as usual. Why don't you take your flowers to a flower

show? I'm sure you'll win many prizes."

Mr. Singh smiled, a flattered smile. "But, then, dear girl, I'm not sure if these flowers would be happy at a flower show. This is their home and they grow as much as they want to. But at a show, they would probably feel confined and hate it as much as I would. No, no flower shows for me. I get my rewards another way."

He looked faintly agitated and tweaked his shock of thick greying hair back with a muddy hand.

"How?" she asked, more to get him to talk. She liked this queer, excitable man whose one love seemed to be his plants and when he talked, she realised a lot of things that she often took for granted. Maybe because Mr. Singh lived so close to nature, his words had that ring of truth about them – as refreshing as the scent of flowers wafting upon a breeze or the sight of wispy clouds floating in a blue summer sky.

"Maybe, reward is not quite the word I ought to have used," clarified Mr. Singh, thinking so hard that he left more muddy streaks on his face as he stroked his chin absent-mindedly.

"I think I could call it quiet satisfaction," he said after a pause. "See those

"He pointed to the rosebeds, "and those . . ." pointing at the tuberoses. "And those Easter lilies there."

Tara turned her head in every direction that he pointed. "Uncle, I'm sure you have almost every kind of flower here." She realised from the quick look that he gave her that she had missed the point he was trying to make altogether.

"No, *bete*, that's not what I was going to tell you about," he said with a slightly impatient air, throwing down the garden tool and standing with his hands on his hips. "It's who I've plan-

ned the garden for."

"Who, Uncle?"

"I'll give you one guess."

"For yourself? For Auntie? No?"

"There," he pointed, "for a person who has done so much for me in my life — my mother!"

Tara looked curiously towards the window. She had seen Mr. Singh's aged mother a few times, sitting on the wide verandah, or hobbling about helped by Mrs. Singh.

Now she caught a strange look on Mr. Singh's face. His eyes were shining with a rare light and his voice was low. And she had a feeling that he was telling her something which he had told few other people before.

"Yes," she said to help him along

"It's for my mother", he emphasised.

"Of course, my wife and I love flowers, but I've planned this garden for my mother. It's one thing I could do for her to show her how much I feel for her. I'm not — I'm not very good with words, you know? Look here . . ." He strode about, drawing Tara after him. "Look at this Night Queen creeper growing over her window. At night, the air is filled with its fragrance. And there are the afternoon roses . . . and there . . ." he named flowers that Tara couldn't identify, but nodded and looked all the same.

It was really one of the most well tended gardens that she had ever seen, and what made it even more meaningful was the reason behind it.

Suddenly, she remembered something discordant, something strange that her mother had once remarked: "Mr. Singh's mother cannot see at all, poor thing! She has cataract in both eyes. How terrible, not to be able to see!"

Now Tara blurted out, "But how? She can't see at all, can she? I mean . . ." Instantly, she was very embarrassed. Did people talk about such things?

Mr. Singh shook his head. There was a sad smile on his face as he said, "No, she can't see — except for a blur, she says."

"Then the flowers? She can't see them either."

Mr. Singh stroked a rose gently. He said slowly, "No, she can't see the flowers. But she can smell them. So I have watched and studied the way the breeze blows around the house. And I laid the flowerbeds so that all day long she gets the fragrance of different flowers wherever she is."

Tara listened fascinated as Mr. Singh went on. "At dawn, the jasmine creeper outside her window bursts into flower. Then as she moves to the verandah to warm herself in the sun, she smells the *rajuigandha* and the lilies that I have planted around the porch. Later in the morning, I pluck the plump white *mogra* and the red fullblown *hibiscus* for her daily *pooja*. In the afternoon, it is the roses outside her window. And the evening brings a lovely mixed fragrance of all the flowers in the garden . . ."

He led the way around the house. "See," he said proudly. There stood his mother leaning on a walking stick in the middle of the rosebed, her nose lifted in the air, smelling the roses that had just opened. Tara saw a peaceful smile on that aged face and suddenly

she turned away. For, in a way, it was something very private.

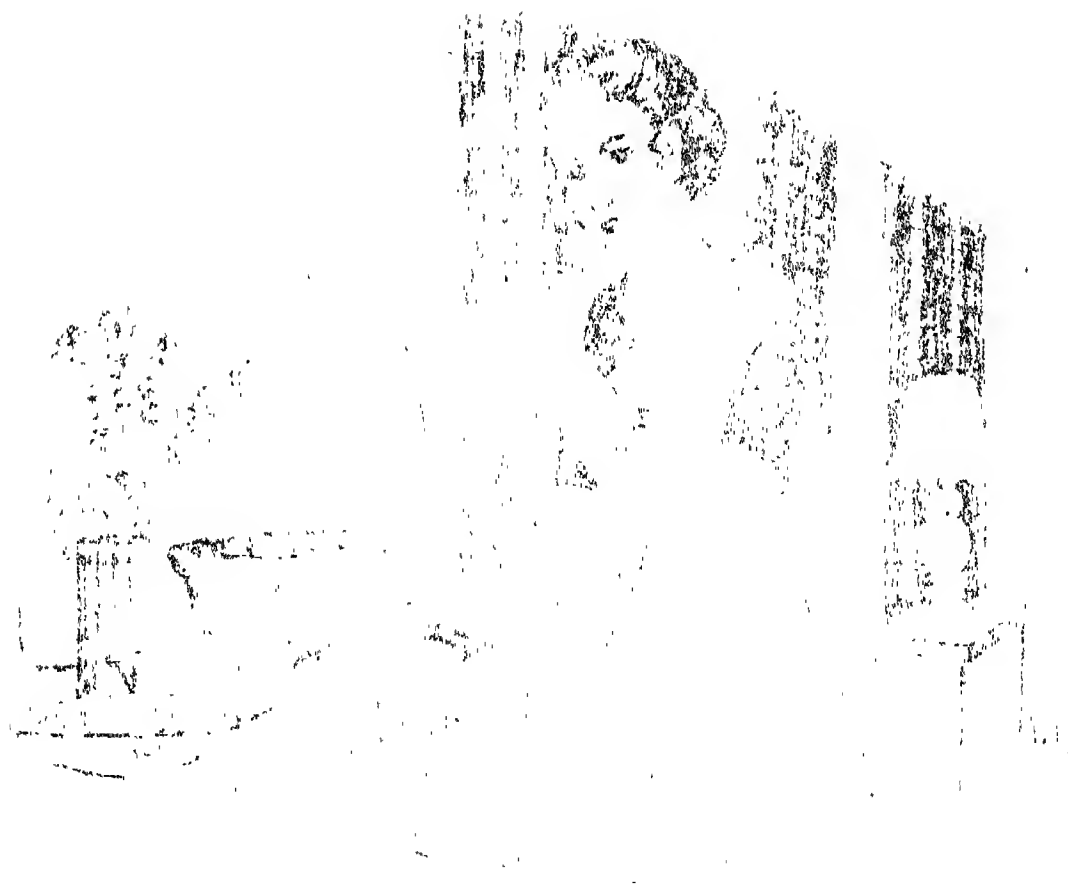
Images came to Tara's mind of her own mother — working, always working very hard, going out to work, returning home to wash and cook and care for her family. Suddenly, Tara felt ashamed of herself, for those silent tantrums and those bitter feelings of resentment. For all the years that her mother had toiled for them all, how could she, Tara, grudge the little chores that she was asked to do? She knew that it made a lot of difference to her mother. She recalled the occasional look of relief on Ma's face whenever she had agreed to run an errand, shop, or cut vegetables.

And here was Mr. Singh, who had laid out an entire garden full of flowers, so that his mother could smell them even though she couldn't see the result of all his labours!

Somewhere a clock struck twelve times. Tara started. "It's time I went," she said gently. She wasn't sure if Mr. Singh had heard her at all, for he was watching his mother with a tender expression. Unwilling to intrude any more upon the moment, Tara turned and went home.

There was still no sign of the boys, but surprisingly, Tara found that she didn't mind. They were still young and irresponsible, she thought. Some day, when they were both older, they would take on their share of the responsibilities. But they were darlings all the same, she thought warmly, in spite of mmade beds and coiled-up socks, and badly knotted shoelaces.

Back in the cool quiet of their home, Tara flew to her little room and plundered her cupboard for all the currency notes and loose change that she had tucked away in various places. It came to



twenty-four rupees and some change. She pondered. It should be just enough to get some lunch together before the family came home. Briefly, Tara reflected that it would have helped if she had been more attentive while watching her mother cook all these years. Since she couldn't cook, she would go and get some food from the restaurant down the road. It would be a real treat!

But there was something she could make herself. Egg custard. She had often watched Ma make it, and it was simple enough. As she broke the eggs into a bowl, she thought with joy of her mother's face when she would come

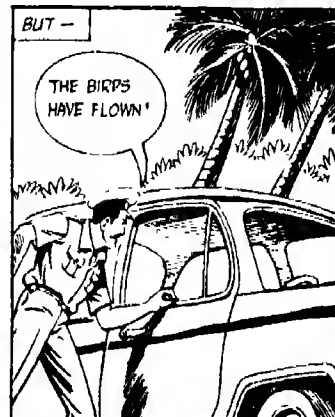
home and see the table arranged for a family lunch.

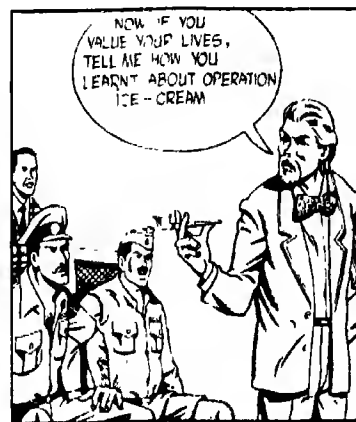
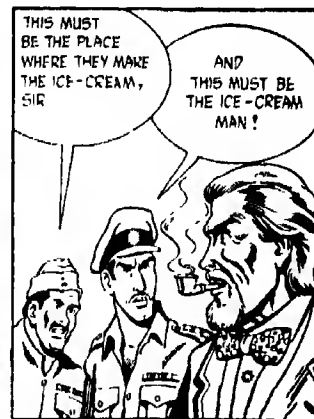
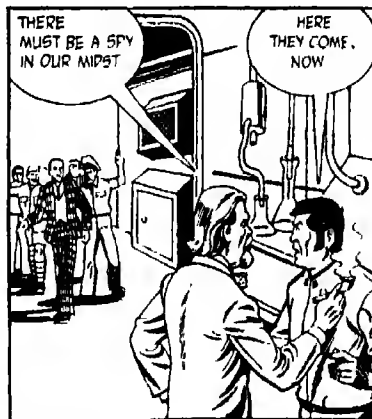
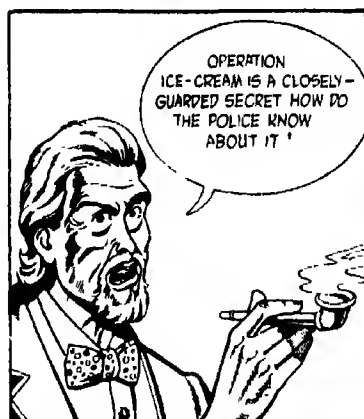
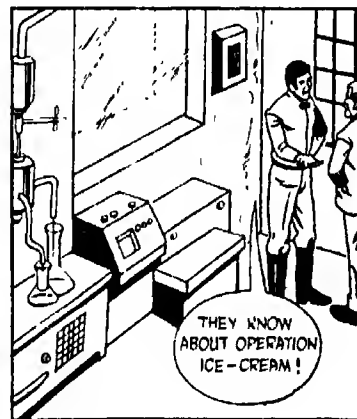
Why not take out the new table cloth, thought Tara, and why not the good crockery? She was sure Ma wouldn't mind and, after all, it was a kind of special occasion.

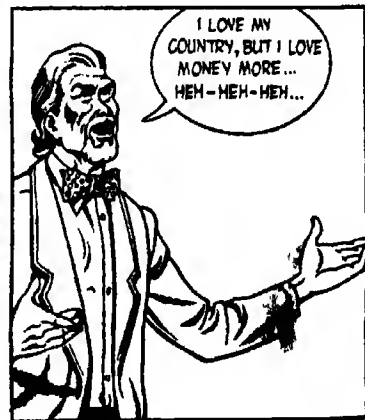
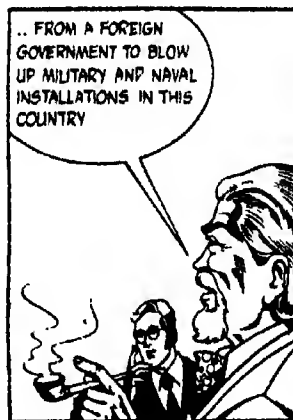
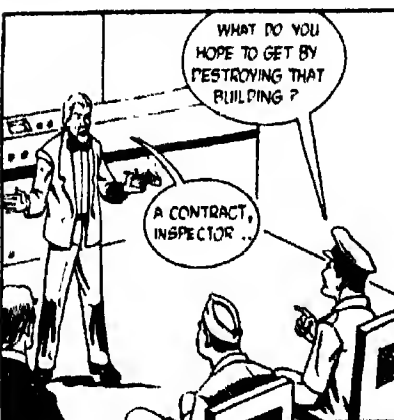
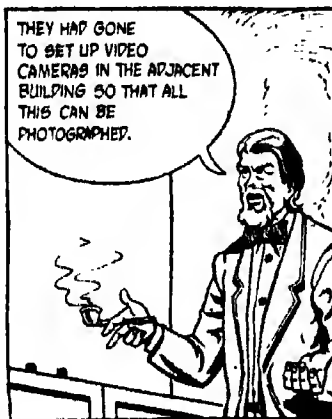
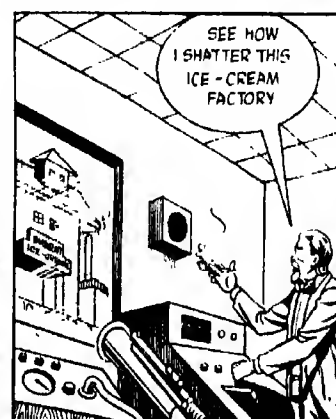
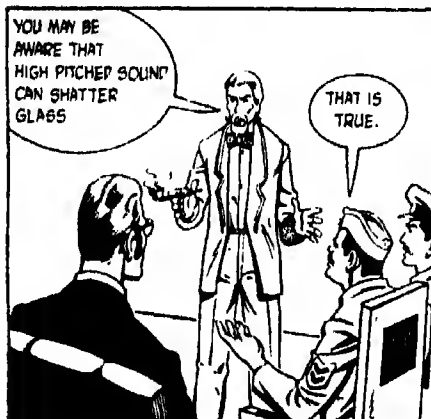
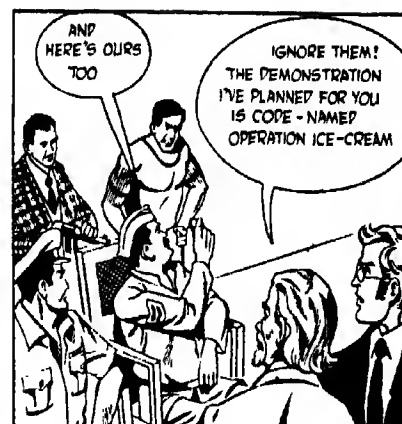
So it was that a tired Mrs. Sarin came home to find the table laid with her best crockery and the dishes with the food steaming inside them, and a little card with a hand-drawn bunch of flowers beside her plate saying: "For Ma — with lots of love from your daughter Tara."

Padmini Rao Banerjee











## WORLD CUP

Everybody was happy and gay,  
 When there was cricket every day.  
 In the recent World Cup India has won,  
 And all over there was frolic and fun.  
 Kapil Dev and his men got a lot of fame,  
 As they put the West Indies to shame.  
 Everybody thought West Indies would win.

But India put all such thoughts into the  
 dustbin.  
 Hats off to Mohinder Amarnath,  
 Who took India to the winning path  
 We Indians are very proud,  
 We can say it clear and loud.

Subir Dhar (13)

# Importance of Grooming

**A**FTER leading your new pony home, you should get to know about grooming which is of vital importance. Now-a-days the horse owner has to be his own groom, stable-boy, and cleaner! Gone are the days when grooms or syces (paid help, who look after horses) were at one's beck and call. Grooming is a major factor in maintaining and promoting the horse's health, and also improving its appearance. And grooming must be correctly learnt under the proper supervision of an instructor.

You must remember to treat each horse as an individual, for, no two horses are the same, either in ability or appearance.

Health and total physical fitness are the greatest attributes of any horse. A horse also feels hungry — just like you do. A horse can be totally fed on just grass, if no work is desired from it. But as soon as you demand work from the horse, you have to give it something more than grass. But always bear in mind, extremes are to be avoided. A horse should be neither underfed or overfed.

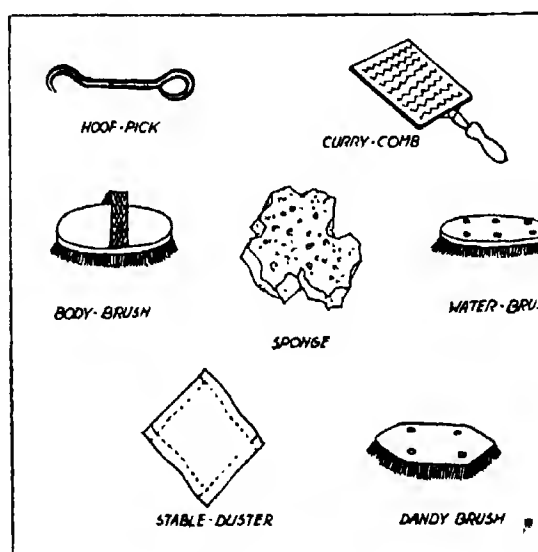
It is very important to have clear, fresh water available to the horse at all times. A horse should be fed according to the amount of work it puts in. Oats, mints, carrots, and certain grass are recommended. A favourite with horses are sugar cubes. These can be given in very limited quantity, after you finish riding.

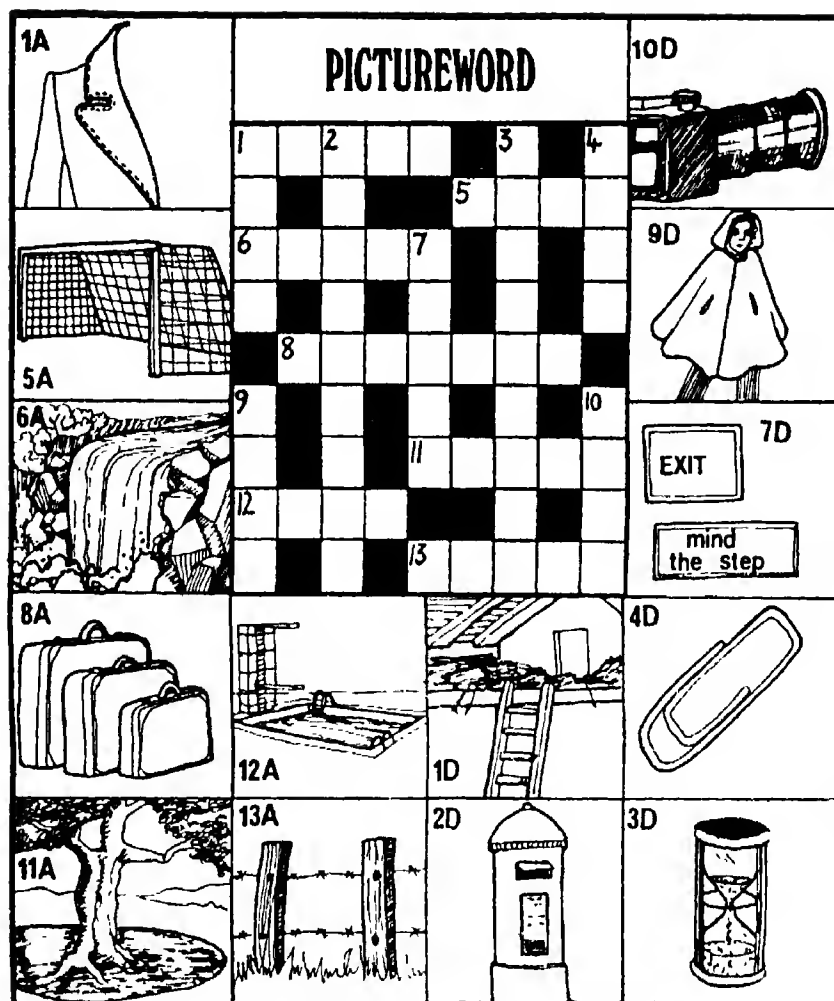
A horse will recognise this as an award for the good work it has put in. It is, indeed, a pleasure to see it gobble up the cubes — neighing and brushing its head against yours — asking for more and more.

The horse owner should be particular about grooming. A careless rider will bring back the horse sweating and often you will see the saddle marks — the next day. Because of this, the horse should always be walked home — cool. Allow the sweat to cool off, gradually.

Horse management is not a simple task, which you can manage on your own. Have at close contact a good vet. If anything seems wrong with your horse, do not hesitate, call for the vet at once.

Each piece in a grooming kit has its own importance:





(First Features)

Hoof Pick — for cleaning out the feet  
This prevents a disease called thrush, which causes lameness.

Dandy Brush — for removing all the mud and dirt, collected after a long ride in the country.

Body Brush — for cleaning out dust from the tail, coat, and mane.

Curry Comb — use it for cleaning the body brush.

Water Brush — use it damp to clean feet, tail, and also mane.

The sponge — for cleaning the eyes and nose.

Stable Duster — for massage and final polish.

Sumitra Senapati

(Solution next month)

## SOLUTION TO JULY PICTUREWORD

### Across

2 Ripple, 5 Fan, 6 Letter, 7 Safe, 10 Ruin, 11 Aviary, 12 Fin, 13 Bridge.

### Down

1 Japan, 3 Pottery, 4 Ears, 6 Leopard, 8 Pixie, 9 Lamb

ANIL was debating over which adventure book he should buy, when a hand fell on his shoulder. He spun around and smiled, as he recognised his friend Vijay's father.

"Hello, mele Sharma!" he greeted him warmly.

Anil's father, who had accompanied him to the shop, shook hands with Mr. Sharma. "It's good to see you again. Has Vijay been discharged from hospital?"

A worried frown creased Mr. Sharma's brow. "Yes, he's back home. You know, the shock he had from the accident has deprived him of the use of his legs. Well, he refuses to undergo further treatment, and so his progress is rather slow."

"I'm sorry to hear that," said Anil's father, sympathetically.

"It's quite disconcerting. But I've decided to send him back to school," said Mr. Sharma. "He'll have to use a wheel-chain till he recovers fully."

"It'll be good to have Vijay back at school," said Anil excitedly.

Mr. Sharma was about to reply, when his daughter called him and he hurried

away, excusing himself.

Vijay was surrounded by sympathisers and well-wishers from the moment he wheeled himself into the classroom. He looked sullen and nervous. The boys vied with each other to put Vijay at ease. Anil's quiet greeting went almost unnoticed by Vijay as he listened to the other boys.

"Hey, Vijay! Come, sit next to me. I'll tell you all that you've missed so far!" exclaimed Ravi.

"I'll lend you my books till you catch up," offered Mahesh. "If your mother will allow me, I'll call on you every evening."

"Thanks a lot!" Vijay looked at them gratefully. "It's very kind of you. I'll speak to my mother."

"Look, I've an idea. With your mother's permission, we can all visit you. Maybe we can play board games—I've got a super one from abroad," suggested Ravi.

The boys saw to it that Vijay was never left alone. They clustered around the wheel-chain once again during lunch break and entertained him with all sorts of news. They did not go out and

play, as they usually did. Vijay's face now had a cheerful expression, as he noticed his friends' concern. Anil looked at Vijay with pensive eyes.

"I say, you fellows, the sports schedule for the term has been put up," yelled one of the boys.

There was a rush to read it. Anil looked at the tennis programme and remarked loudly to his neighbour, "It's going to be a walkover for me this year. Vijay's out, he was my closest rival, so now the trophy's mine!" he said rubbing his hands gleefully.

There was a stunned silence which was broken by the whisper of the wheel-chair being propelled away. Most of the boys cast disgusted looks at Anil and went after Vijay to console him.

"What made you say such a thing?" demanded his best friend, Dilip, angrily.

"Well, it's the truth, isn't it? Vijay

can't play anymore." Anil retorted.

"Vijay was so upset by Anil's heartless talk that he had to be taken home," was the rumour that spread around the class. Some of the boys in other classes too got to hear about it. Before the day was over, Anil met with a wall of hostility wherever he went.

When his father returned from work, he called Anil and said harshly, "Mr. Sharma rang me up and told me about your disgraceful behavior. I'm ashamed of you, Anil. Is this the way you speak about a boy when he's down?"

Anil remained silent. His father's words did not seem to have had any effect on him. For, he continued to make cutting remarks within Vijay's hearing.

A couple of days later, some of the boys were playing "SCRABBLE" with Vijay during the break. Their cheerful arguments drew others to the spot.

"That's all he's fit for now!" sneered



Anil loudly. "Perhaps he should learn how to knit and sew!"

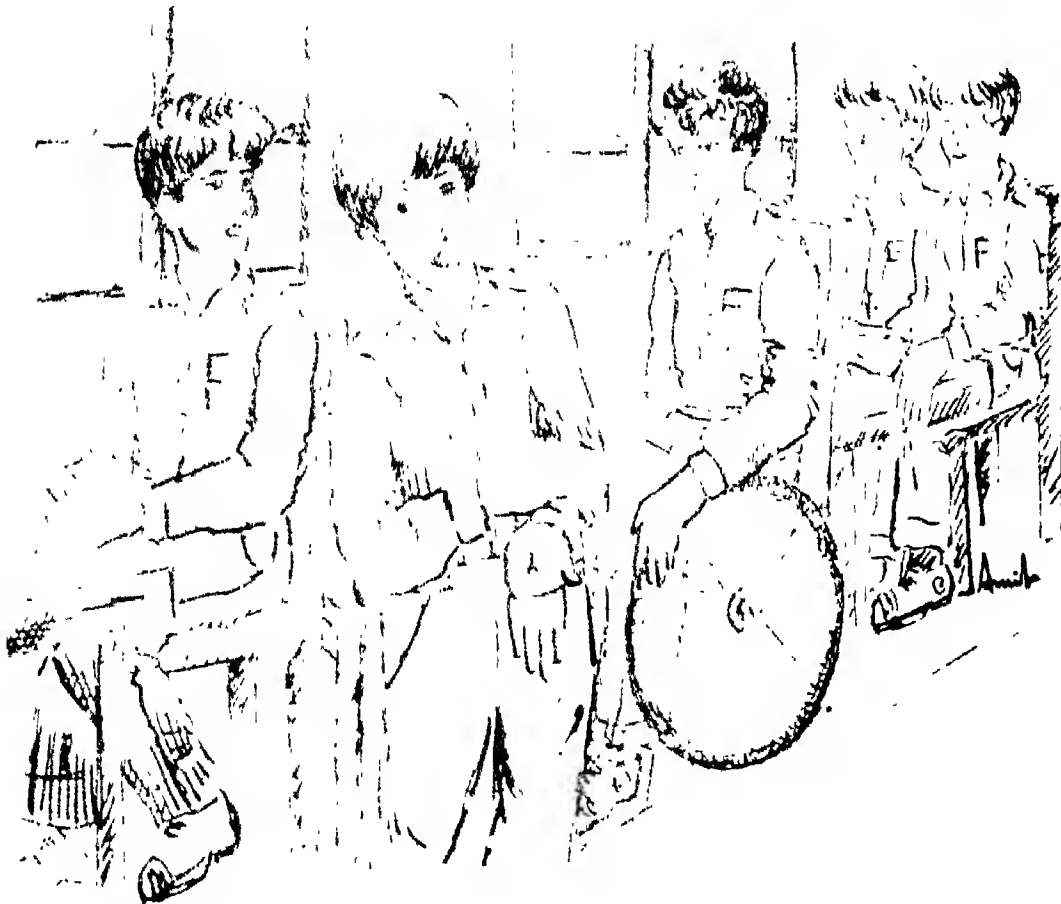
"Don't, Anil!" whispered Dilip. "Vijay can hear you."

"So what? He must learn to accept his disability," replied Anil defiantly.

The next morning, when Vijay wheeled himself to his place, he saw a cardboard box on his desk. It was an indoor cricket game, and had a label. "FOR VIJAY—THE ONLY GAME HE CAN PLAY NOW—FROM ANIL". Vijay turned white with anger and passed the box to his friends, who had hurried over to see what had upset him. The boys rallied round Vijay and made a fuss of him. But Anil's words rankled and Vijay found that it was impossible to forget them.

This incident proved to be the last straw for the rest of the class. None of the boys spoke to Anil, and even Dilip was cool to him. All along he had been a popular boy, but now he was ignored by everyone in his class and other boys in the school.

Anil had plenty of time on his hands now. His untiring workout on the tennis court earned him the approval of Sanjay, the Games Captain of the school, especially after a gruelling scratch session in which Anil had excelled himself. But he wondered why none of Anil's class friends had shouted with joy as they usually did when one of their classmates won. He understood only when he was told all about Anil's callous behaviour towards Vijay. Anil



tried to look unconcerned when Sanjay, too, began to regard him with contempt, to show that he did not approve of his unsporting behaviour.

Anil's work in class also improved. His teacher announced that Anil had topped the class in the weekly tests, however, there was no appreciative response from the boys.

"As a reward, I propose that Anil be the Monitor of the month," continued the teacher.

There was a snigger when someone in the back row muttered, "Hands up all those who'll listen to Anil!"

The teacher was further puzzled because his suggestion did not evoke any response, for he was sure that a popular boy like Anil would be a good choice. He came to know the reason when he mentioned it in the Staff room. Anil was further isolated when his own class teacher began looking at him with disapproval.

Vijay glared at Anil, who was toss-

ing a tennis ball from one hand to the other making an imaginary serve. "That swollen head needs to be taught a lesson!" Vijay fumed silently, goaded beyond endurance.

"Hey, you chaps! There's to be a surprise tennis match at the end of the tournament," shouted one of the boys some weeks later when he read the new notices that had been put up.

The entire school waited with bated breath to see who the mystery player would be. Anil, who had won all the matches till then, was greeted by icy silence as he walked on to the court and waited for his opponent. At first it was a gasp and it then turned into thunderous cheering as Vijay, dressed in tennis whites, appeared with his racquet.

"Mmm, he never told us he had been undergoing treatment."

"I'm crossing my fingers for him!"

Anil smiled at Vijay, whose nerves tightened as he mistook it for a sneer.



He was determined to wipe the smug look off Anil's face.

The game was a closely fought one. Both Anil and Vijay gave nothing away. Vijay, in particular, played as if he had been inspired, and all the boys agreed unanimously that Vijay's game was better than before.

Each won a set and so the third one was sure to be decisive. Anil was leading 5-2. And it was apparent that Vijay was flagging.

"I hope he'll come through! Would not it be a real shame if he lost after his gallant effort?"

"Yes, Vijay ought to win!"

"Come on, Vijay! Play up!"

The boys watched anxiously as Anil prepared to serve. He took a deep breath and served. It was an ace which left Vijay standing tiredly in the centre of the court.

"Game set and match to Anil Mathur!" announced the umpire.

There was a courteous applause from the teachers.

The boys swarmed on to the court and clustered around Vijay. They pointedly turned their back to Anil and applauded loudly as Vijay went up to receive the runner-up cup.

There was not a single clap from the boys when Anil walked to the dais to receive the Champion's trophy. He asked the Headmaster if he could speak to the spectators.


"I'm sure you'll all agree that Vijay deserves this trophy. You may have wondered why I kept making those cutting remarks about him. It was to goad Vijay into making an effort to walk. You have to be cruel to be kind! Today Vijay has proved that he is the real champion with his courageous fight back to health!" he concluded.

Vijay flushed as he accepted the huge Silver Cup from Anil. He now realised what Anil had had to endure over the long weeks. Vijay led the cheering, "To good old Anil, hip hip hurray!"

Neela Subramaniam

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were shipped from China to the Philippines, crossed the Pacific, traversed Mexico by mule train, were shipped to Cuba, went down in a hurricane off Florida's east coast in 1715, lay in the ocean long after the ship had disintegrated, and were recovered 250 years later.

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**DICK SMITH**  
the famed special effects creator has in his basement workshop as a record of the many actors he has worked with a collection of their faces cast in plaster!



## WORLD CUP CRICKET

# India's Fairy-tale Triumph

West Indies, Pakistan, England, and Australia. Even Sri Lanka enjoyed better respect than India! The odds against India were indeed heavy. The mainstay of their batting, Sunil Gavaskar and Dilip Vengsarkar, were not among runs, and G. R. Viswanath was not among the 14 selected for the World Cup. Kapil Dev was a new leader. India did not possess a lethal bowling attack, and the playing conditions in England were not conducive to our cricketers.

But contrary to all expectations, India gave one of their best performances ever to crown themselves world champions. It was, in fact, one of the greatest upsets in the history of cricket when the 'underdogs' became the champions. It was Indian cricket's most glorious hour, since Apt Wadekar and his team notched up rubber wins over West Indies and England in 1971.

The glorious uncertainties of cricket to use a cliché unfolded themselves in full splendour at Lord's on June 25 when India were crowned 'kings' of one-day cricket.

From a desperate and humiliating position of 17 for five in the Group match against the lowly ranked Zimbabwe, to a reverberating and incredible 13 run victory in the final over West Indies may sound like a fairy tale. But that is what happened at Lord's in the final. The packed crowd at Lord's, the 'mecca' of international cricket, was stunned as the West Indian pride was humbled by the Indian cricketers. A strong Indian batting line up, with virtually no tail had earlier collapsed

INDIA won the Prudential World Cup by beating the two-time holders West Indies twice, in the very first Group encounter on June 9, and then in the final on June 25. The myth of West Indian invincibility in one-day cricket, particularly in the World Cup where they had not lost a single match in the two previous tournaments in 1975 and 1979, was exploded skyhigh by the daedevil band of Kapil and his gallant warriors.

After the disastrous toms in Pakistan and West Indies, prior to the World Cup, the prestige of Indian cricket was at its lowest ebb. So, when the Indian team left to participate in the World Cup not a single cricket lover could think of a rosy picture for the Indian team against stiff opposition from giants like

for 183 against the most menacing bowling attack in the world. And then came the greatest shock 'The strongest batting line up of the world crumbled for 140 against the weakest bowling attack of the tournament'

The galaxy of batsmen like Vivian Richards, Clive Lloyd, Gordon Greenidge, Desmond Haynes and Larry Gomes could together score only 60 runs amongst themselves. But not till the last wicket fell could one predict the outcome of the match. The final really had all the makings of an Alfred Hitchcock thriller - full of suspense and drama.

In their first encounter West Indies skipper, Clive Lloyd had put India to bat first and lost the match India made 262 for eight, mainly due to fine batting by 'Man of the Match' Yashpal Sharma, who scored 89. In



*Srikkanth*

their reply the West Indians mustered 228, flopping against some spirited bowling by Roger Binny (3 for 48) and Ravi Shastri (3 for 26)

In their return match, West Indies batted first to score 282 with Richards hammering 119 to win the 'Man of the Match' award. India looked like making a light of it, but an injury to Dilip Vengsarkar upset their apparent as India lost the match by 66 runs. Mohin-

der Amarnath waged a lone battle with a well-made 80.

In earlier encounters, India had trounced Zimbabwe by five wickets and lost to Australia by 162 runs. And then came the turning point of the tournament as far as India were concerned. In their return match with Zimbabwe, they were precariously placed at nine for four when Kapil Dev joined Sandip Patil. A defeat would have put India out of reckoning for a semi final berth and a defeat seemed certain when Patil left at 17. The cream of Indian batting, Smil Gavaskar (recalled after being dropped for two matches), Srikkanth, Mohinder Amarnath, Yashpal Sharma and Patil, had gone.

But India had a man for the occasion to pull them out of the woods -- the great Kapil Dev. He shunned his usual reckless approach, took time to settle down, and played the innings of his life. In a sedate manner, he put on 60 runs for the sixth wicket, with Roger Binny, who scored 22 and left at the score of 77. Ravi Shastri added only seven runs with Kapil and left at 78. Kapil was running out of partners but gaining in confidence. Madan Lal next scored 17 priceless runs to put on 62 valuable runs with his skipper.

It was at the fall of the eighth wicket that Kapil realised the urgency to score fast and he found an able ally in Syed Kirmani. The two plundered 124 runs in an unfinished ninth wicket partnership, a record for the World Cup. In a furious onslaught, Kapil tore apart the Zimbabwean bowling to hit an unbeaten 175, which broke the previous highest score of 171 not out by New Zealand opener Glenn Turner against East Africa in 1975.

Kapil was at his best, as he unleashed a barrage of incredible strokes to hit 17 power-packed boundaries and six savage sixes in a devastating fashion. Kapil's cavalier display took India to a respectable score of 266 for eight with Syed Kirmani contributing 24.

Inspired by their skipper's efforts, the Indians bowled and fielded superbly to win

the match by 31 runs, but not before the Zimbabwe all-rounder, Kevin Curran, had threatened to overtake India's total with a valiant knock of 73.

India never looked back after the glorious victory over Zimbabwe, and in the space of a week humbled Australia, England, and West Indies on the way to the World Cup crown.

For all their victories, the Indian team owed it to their bowlers. In the crucial tie against Australia, India owed it to Roger Binny, who won the 'Man of the Match' award for his spell of 4 for 29. Batting first, India made 217, which in no way could be termed as a match winning total against the Australian batting line up, which had amassed 320 for nine in their first match against India. The only plus point in India's favour was the absence of Australian skipper Kim Hughes, who was injured.

But India demolished their opponents for a paltry score of 129 to win the match by 118 runs and storm into the semi-finals. After the initial collapse triggered off by Binny and Balwinder Sandhu, Madan Lal mopped up the latter half of the Australian batting to capture 4 wickets for 20 runs.

Right from the word 'go', the Indians had gone on an upset-creating spree! Four wins in six matches had given them a place in the semi-final. It had been a hard-earned progress by India, and yet the English newspapers called India's tryst with England in the semis a marvellous piece of luck, and for the hosts a virtual entry into the final.

But 'Kapil's Devils' had preserved their best for a showdown with the over confident English team. England had lost only one match - against New Zealand - on their way to the semi-finals, and three of their batsmen, Graeme Fowler, David Gower, and Allan Lamb, had scored over 250 runs individually. But they were yet to meet a strong and determined team.

\* In what is considered by the whole Indian team as their best match of the tournament,

India beat England by six wickets with a professional approach - normally associated with the English players. Old Trafford, where India had shocked West Indies on June 9, saw the Indians at their best - crushing England authoritatively, on June 22. Yet, the Thames didn't seem to have been set on fire! It was to be after three days!

Electing to bat first, England were off to a flying start, as openers Chris Tavare and



*Mohinder Amarnath*

Graeme Fowler put on 69 runs and the English commentators predicted a big total for England. It was then that Binny struck. He removed both the openers, while Mohinder Amarnath claimed the vital wicket of Gower at 117. England's middle-order batsmen were slackened and led to their doom by some fine bowling by Mohinder and Kapil Azad, as the two conceded just 55 runs in their 24 overs and claimed three wickets. England were all

out for 213 — not a good score for a team which had crossed the 300 mark in their earlier Group matches.

India were given a good start by Gavaskar and Srikkanth before both left when the score was 46 and 50 respectively, Gavaskar making 25 and Srikkanth 19. Mohinder and Yashpal then put their heads down to take the score to 65 for two from 25 overs at tea.

The scoring rate by India had been slow, but it picked up after the break with Mohinder setting the trend with a six off Vic Marks. Yashpal followed suit and slammed a six each off Dilley and Willis, the latter being a breathtaking slog over square leg. The two added 92 before Mohinder left in the 40th over after making 46.

The English hon roared again at the fall of Mohinder's wicket, but was soon pushed into

its den by some stupendous, classic strokeplay by Sandip Patil. The faster the English bowlers bowled at him, the harder Patil belted them to slam all corners of the ground. He cracked eight boundaries and a six in his whirlwind unbeaten knock of 51. Yashpal was out for 61 at the score of 205, leaving Patil to make the winning stroke, as India reached 217 for four with more than five overs to spare.

What happened at Lords on June 25 is now history — a golden chapter in the annals of Indian cricket. Confronted with the pace quartet of Andy Roberts, Michael Holding, Joel Garner and Malcolm Marshall India collapsed for 183. Only Srikkanth, with his electrifying knock of 38 and Mohinder Amarnath with a sedate 26 could stand up against the thunderbolts of the Caribbean pace

*Ian Botham being bowled for six by Kirti Azad (from India's semi-final with England)*

(ASIA FEATURES)



Flower tie

battery.

Srikkanth played a delightful innings, hammering seven boundaries and pulling a six off Roberts during his brave stay at the wicket. He executed the best shot of the tournament when, going down on his right knee, he smacked a widish half-volley from Roberts with a 'Kanhai' like slash as the ball hit the fence in less than a second. The commentator described it well when he said that he saw the ball only when it hit the fence!

India managed to reach 183 only due to some resolute batting by the last pair, Kirmani and Sandhu, who added 22 runs. There was even talk of the final being reduced to a one-sided affair, when things really began to happen.

Sandhu broke through early by removing the dangerous Greenidge at the score of five. In came the 'king' among batsmen, Viv Richards who straightway launched a tirade against the Indian bowlers to give indications that the match wouldn't go beyond 30 overs. Richards had made 33 with seven boundaries, when Madan removed Haynes in the 12th over. The match, which looked like being finished within 30 overs in the wake of Richard's devastating batting, now took a turn in India's favour when in his next over Madan got rid of Richards to a brilliant catch by Kapil and followed it up by wrapping Larry Gomes to make the score 57 for 4. Panic ran through the West Indian camp as Lloyd and Bacehus fell to Bunny and Sandhu respectively. The score then was 76 for 6.

Jeff Dujon and Marshall carried the score to 119 to raise visions of a West Indian win, as 68 runs only were required from 20 overs. But an inspired bowling change by Kapil, who brought on Mohinder, sealed the fate of the defending champions. Mohinder removed Dujon with his first delivery and Marshall was gone in the next over. Kapil sent back Roberts when the score was 126 and 'Man of the Match' Mohinder settled the issue by trapping Holding lbw to give India a historic vic-

tory. West Indies had been bundled out for 140, and the Indian supporters at Lord's erupted into a frenzied 'bhangra'!

Lloyd and his men were denied a hat trick World Cup win by the underdogs of one-day cricket — India — who had earlier been dismissed as 'lambs for slaughter' by one and all.

During the course of a delightful fortnight, these 'lambs' had become the slaughterers! It was a 'drams-to-heaven' transformation for Indian cricket, as India's prestige in international cricket touched an all-time high when skipper Kapil Dev held aloft the glittering Prudential Cup (photo on page 61)

It would be churlish to single out individual performances for India's win. The victory was a collective and determined effort of the team. Never in the past had an Indian team showed so much of dedication and killer instinct.

India had a man for every occasion, which is evident from the 'Man of the Match' awards won by Yashpal Sharma, Madan Lal, Roger Bunny, Kapil Dev and consecutive awards for Mohinder Amarnath in the semi-final and final. India's greatest asset had been their fielding in the last two matches. It was panther like in the outfield, and the catching had a touch of Eknath Solkar, as not a single catch was floored.

Apart from winning the World Cup, India had many glories to their credit, like Kapil's record breaking effort of 175 not out against Zimbabwe. Kirmani's five catches in an innings against Zimbabwe. Kapil and Kirmani's record ninth wicket stand of 125 against Zimbabwe, Roger Bunny's haul of 18 wickets — the largest of the tournament.

For the next four years, India will be regarded as 'one-day kings'. Naturally the players would be under tremendous pressure to live upto their reputation. It will, indeed, be a hard task but till then there can be bouquets and celebrations over this fairy-tale triumph!

Vijay Lokapally





*Hey you sniffs and snuffles, umbrellas  
and gumboots, insects around the  
light at night,*

Rain! Pah! Scoldings. Scoldings. Scoldings.

"Have you wiped your feet dry? Your feet, I said. Let me see your head. Heavens! You are soaking wet. Change your clothes at once. What is that? Socks? You call those socks?"

And so on and socks forth. Pah! The best thing I can think of doing when it rains is to curl up with a mystery book, and a bag of peanuts. I read the peanuts and eat the bag of . . . . Sorry, I mean the other way round. Of course, I am never allowed such luxury. Here's what normally happens.

I — reading, eating peanuts. Happy in my own world, not disturbing anybody by sharing my peanuts, and so on. At

peace. Enter brother.

Brother otherwise known as Kukruki or sometimes Bongala. "Bhaiya, have you seen Lini?" (Lini is our cat.) "Have you seen the lizard that was near the window near the table? Have you seen my . . . what are you eating? All right, Bhaiya. See you."

And out he goes with half my peanuts.

I sigh, then try to put on the expression of a long suffering elder brother (what trials we face), and then go back to my book. Is it the old man or the servant boy who will be caught now?

And then explosion! Enter Raghu.

Raghu: "Hey, Perky, wake up, you fungus-head! We have to be up and about. Go, get your football. Raining? What's a bit of rain? Come, let me finish those peanuts for you. Come on. Oops."

And, of course, he must drop the bag and, of course, he must yell at me.

"Oaf, you clumsy panda, come on and fish them out. What a waste of peanuts."

And, of course, at that precise moment, when we are both on our hands and knees, grabbing peanuts from under the bed, under the table, under the cupboard — what aggravating things peanuts are — at that precise moment will come in my mother/Raghu's mother with a highly clean and neat hoity-toity aunt/cousin/friend/neighbour.

Mother (either): "Oh Perky, Raghu. This is Mrs . . . . . What on earth are you doing under there? Raghu, there's something in your hair. Go on, wash it off. Quickly."

And the lady, meanwhile, will look around the room with disdain, and draw her sari closer and see all those peanuts on the floor, on the bed, on the table, on the stool, in my bag, on the window sill, and she will tell my mother that she has just remembered she has given the

wrong kitchen duster to her cook. So she better go and correct it.

"You see," she will say, "I always use the blue on Tuesdays, and today I think I gave him the purple one."

And then after she goes, of course, the scoldings, the tongue lashings, and the exasperations. "Is this how you keep your room? Is this a barn for hippos?" (I've never heard of a barn for hippos yet.) "Is this a book or a fossil? Those peanuts! They look as if King Harsha gave them to you!"

Really! And at that dramatic moment, Baby will walk in, with Lini and my brother, and between them, the mothers and Raghu, it will be like a library crashing down — the history books piling into the books on animals, the mathematics books dividing themselves, the geography books setting sail, the encyclopaedia gaining insight into the comics, and the football books kicking off.



"Bhaiya, peanuts! Raghu, what have you done to your shirt? Peanuts! You are all dunderheads, I tell you, that's not dirt that's science. Raghu, go and wash it . . . Peanuts . . . Can't you give him peanuts? Meeow . . . do you mean? Of

course, I am old enough. PEANUTS . . . . ."

Next time, remind me to go to Tibet to read mystery books. Sigh.

*Perky*

## "My dear Perky"

*Hello P,P,Pe,Per,K,Ky,*

At last you've arrived! But you wasted a lot of my time by making me hunt for you. I tried my very best to stick some posters on lamp posts, but I was scolded or shooed away by somebody or the other every time. Very sad, no? Then, instead of sitting quiet, I examined closely every person I met, to see whether it was you. When I realised that this effort was fruitless, I thought you must have gone to Mars or some other planet to visit some cousin of yours (or should I now guess, to collect earth samples and fetch a microscope). Am I correct? By the way, what is your scientist friend (Raghu) doing? Has he

hit upon any interesting theories? I think you should write a book about your adventures.

Suja Eliyas, Gopalpuri, Kutch

*Dear Sa-Se-Si-So-Suja,*

Mars? Well, Mars is not all that interesting. Nor the moon. This place is best—after all, there are a lot of lamp posts here. About Raghu. Is there such a person? I think I've heard of him in connection with some work being done on brainless creatures or something. It's all very dull really, so you better stay as my friend. Okay?

*Your Pokayingly  
Perky*

# This helps him when he is teething...



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*Hamdard*

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All in an easily assimilable form to build your baby sturdy and strong and keep him alert and smiling.



# ...and this helps him grow strong!

HD-4974



A BOX of crayons was Piu's birthday present. It was a shiny box, with a gold band all round it. Inside, the colours were placed in a neat row, side by side. They were lying ready to be used. But the colours in the box were not happy. Each one wanted to be the first to be used.

"I'm the most important colour," said Red. "Piu cannot draw any flower without me, and what's the good of any picture without a red rose?"

"Pooh!" said Green. "Piu knows better than to make roses. Who has heard of a rose without a thorn? You make me think of pricks and pain, with your talk."

Just then, Blue got up and spoke. "Be quiet, both of you. You surprise me with your jealousies. Red will make Piu's picture look gaudy, and all green

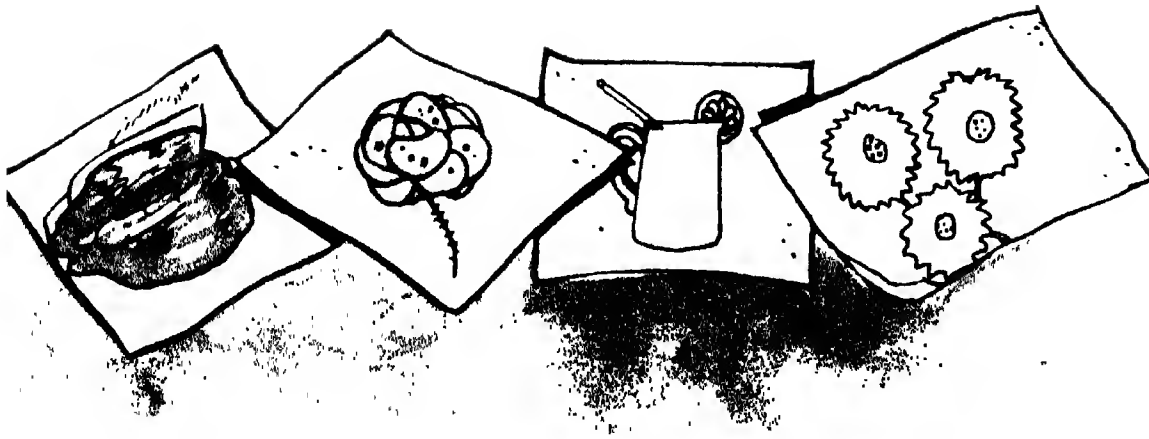
in a picture will look like a forest. Piu will only use ME, to draw blue water in a lily pond."

"How right you are," said Violet. "I can then be a flower growing in the shade beside the blue pond."

"I beg your pardon," said Yellow. "Why, next to a blue pond, a violet flower will hardly be seen. Piu will use me and draw a garden of yellow sunflowers growing by the pond."

"But what is the use of a garden full of sunflowers?" asked Orange. "You can't eat them, can you? I hope Piu chooses me. I can make a whole orange tree, full of fruit. I can even make a jug of orange juice for her."

"Did someone speak of being the best colour for Piu's drawing book? Hal Hal Hal! That is only ME—Indigo," said a loud voice.



The other colours were angry with the cheeky speaker.

"How will anyone know it's Piu's drawing book, unless she writes her name on it? She will write it in my colour," said bold Indigo.

"Proud as a peacock, you are!" the others said. "We'll see how often Piu will touch your proud face."

By now, all the crayons were busy quarrelling and shouting at each other. The loudest of all was Black.

"Silence!" he yelled. "I am so powerful that if I sweep my hand over all of you, you will all get hidden and only my strong, black face will be seen."

The colours were quite shocked. They began mumbling and grumbling among themselves.

"Hush!" said White, the peacemaker. "I can hear voices in the room."

Just then, Piu and her mother entered the room. Piu at once spotted her shiny crayon box and drawing book.

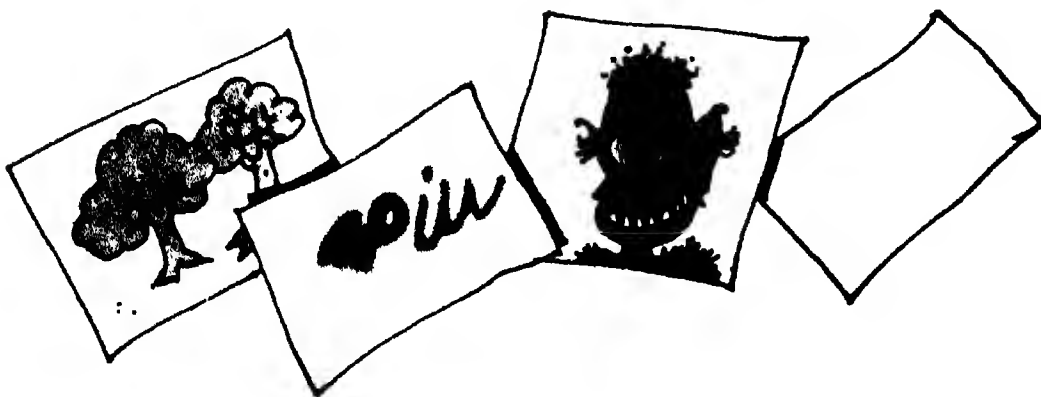
"Oh Mummy, what a lovely gift you have chosen for me. Thank you very much for it," said Piu and gave her mother a big kiss and hug.

She looked at the row of bright colours.

"Which one should I use first?" she thought. 'They all look so pretty.'

The colours waited in excitement, wondering who would be chosen first.

Mummy was always ready to help Piu. She smiled and said, "Use all of them, dear. Draw a picture of a rainbow on the first page of your book."



Piu took out all the colours. One by one, she began to use them—violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red. Piu then picked up the black crayon to draw a black line under the rainbow when Mummy stopped her.

"It will spoil your picture, dear," she explained. "There're no black shades in a rainbow."

Poor Black was very sad and dropped a big, black blob, er... tear. Piu, too, was sad.

"Then, where can I use this colour? Mummy, why did they put it in the box if it is not a nice colour?"

"Oh, no, dear. Black is a very useful colour. You can use it to write your name. It will look nice and clear on the cover."

Piu and the black crayon were both so happy at Mummy's words.

Only the shy white crayon was left now. It was too good a colour to push and jump up. But Piu had not forgotten

white. She asked Mummy how she could use it.

"Put it aside for a while, dear," said Mummy. "White is a fresh and pure colour. It is used to draw light in a dark picture. When you draw a picture of a rainy day, you can use it to draw happy, little raindrops falling on a black roof."

White was so happy to be Mummy's favourite colour. She gave a big smile, closed her eyes and fell off to sleep in her place, in the box.

Now, all the colours were at peace. How happy the colours looked beside one another.

"It is so foolish to be selfish," they said. "None of us could have looked so lovely, all alone."

Since that day, no colour likes to be left alone. All pictures have to be made with many colours. Only then can they become gay and smiling.

S. Mazumdar



(Continued from page 10)

Georges Remi passed away on March 3, 1983. By then, nearly 25 "albums" of Tintin had been published. And these have appeared not only in Belgic, but in more than thirty other languages, including Bengali.

Herge, it appears, had no formal training in art. He first thought of the stories, and drew the characters from imagination. For several years, he used to draw them in black and white, as they were the days of the War, and he had to economise on paper and other drawing material. Once things became easy, he went in for colour, which resulted in more imaginative stories that called for a larger number of characters, too. That cute little dog, Snowy, for one. The bearded ex-seaman, Captain Haddock, for another. Every time he opens his mouth, he cannot but exclaim, "Billions of blistering barnacles!" Or the two detectives, Thomson and Thompson. They all add to Tintin's adventures and inject into them an adequate dose of suspense.

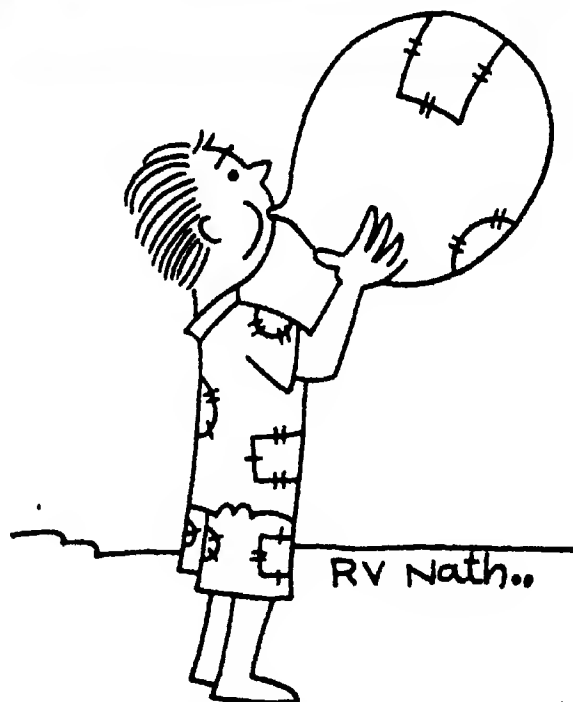
Herge's was, to begin with, a one-man show. In course of time, he felt the need for assistants to do all the research to develop the sequences and ensure authenticity of the locations when Tintin began going places. Of late, he had ten assistants to work for him.

Among Herge's many fans was our staff artist, Subir Roy (who gave you the two comics serials, "The Rhino Trail" and "The Chandipur Jewels"). One of the first letters he received from Herge is reproduced on page 11. Along with it appear a set of "stamps", where the centrepiece sports a self-portrait of Herge. When he was told that Mr. Roy had joined "Children's World" to draw comics, he wrote: "I guess you must be

very happy about your new job! Did you know that I started my career quite the same way as yours? Yes, at the beginning, I also took part in the birth of a comics magazine! I wish you good luck!"

The year 1979 saw the 50th birth anniversary of Tintin. Belgium honoured his creator by issuing a postage stamp. A statue of Tintin stands in one of the parks in Brussels as a permanent tribute to Remi. A large frescoe is in the making in a subway station in that city, capturing in colour some of Tintin's adventures. Brussels is also soon to open a Tintin Museum, besides an amusement park depicting Tintin's adventures. All these will keep alive the memory of Georges Remi and his world famous character for many years to come.

R.K.



POOR JOHN AND HIS POORER BALLOON !

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## **MAGAZINE CENTRE**

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GREAT games are so because of the glorious uncertainties they conceal within themselves. Wimbledon, the greatest and most prestigious Tennis tournament on earth, certainly lived upto expectations. The summer, too, in terms of uncertainties. But the final events came as an anti-climax. The fire and fierce competition that had characterised the Bjorn Borg-McEnroe finals of 1980 and 1981, and the Jimmy Connors-McEnroe final of 1982 were not there. The events did not rise to their normal dizzy heights.

As the curtains went up at the All-England Club, tennis pundits the world over predicted a Connors McEnroe final in men's singles and a Chris Evert Lloyd-Martina Navratilova final in women's. Well, their predictions came only half true.

John McEnroe the angry man of tennis, proved that he is most at home on the grass courts of Wimbledon. It was smooth sailing for him almost throughout. With his arch rival Borg having decided to hang his racquet for good, and the new-found sensation of the year, Yannick Noah, who won the French Open earlier, not appearing at Wimbledon, McEnroe had only two potential enemies to take care of, the reigning champion Jimmy Connors, and the dangerous Czech, Ivan Lendl.

Connors who had staged a wonderful comeback last year to claim the crown at the age of 29, this time fell pathetically before the powerful services of the South African, Kevin Curren. Serving an astounding number



*A winner's kiss from McEnroe (ASIA FEATURES)*

of 33 aces, Curren literally made the champion dance to his tune. Connors went down 3-6, 7-6, 3-6, 6-7.

"I have never served so well in a match so long," said the giant killer afterwards. "He didn't seem to know where they were going and I think may be he thought I didn't, either."

But the 12th seeded Curren met his match in the semi-finals in the little known Chris Lewis of New Zealand. Lunging and diving all over the court, Chris Lewis beat the South African 6-7, 6-4, 7-6, 6-7, 8-6. Lewis thus became the first New Zealander to reach the Wimbledon final in 69 years. The 26-year-old, ranked 91, came within one match of the game's most coveted prize. He was the first unseeded player to reach the final since West German Wilhelm Bungert in 1967.

The second semi-final between McEnroe and Ivan Lendl had promises of a great



*Runner-up Chris Lewis*

match. But plagued by double faults the Czech went down 6-7, 4-6, 4-6.

The final however was a tame one-sided affair. It was in fact the most one-sided climax to the tournament since 1974 when Ken Rosewall of Australia also managed to claim only six games against Connors whom McEnroe succeeded this time. McEnroe won 6-2, 6-2, 6-2.

Lewis's speed and stamina which helped him reach the final were not enough to beat McEnroe, the 24-year-old second seed. Even in the lacklustre final the ruthless champion enthralled a packed Centre Court audience by his speed, variations of pace and his superb pace control particularly on the volley. McEnroe's approach to the game is best described by the former champion Arthur Ashe: 'He is a stiletto. He just slices people

up like Zorro. A cut here, a nick there. It is unbelievable.'

McEnroe, partnering fellow American, Peter Fleming, also claimed the men's doubles beating the US twins Tim and Tom Gullikson 6-4, 6-3, 6-4 in one hour and 48 minutes, thus establishing his undisputed superiority in the grass courts.

In the women's events the greatest upset came rather early when the fancied Chris Evert Lloyd was eliminated by Kathy Jordan 6-1, 7-6. Chris, who had won the Wimbledon singles crown three times earlier, was on the threshold of taking the grand slam having already bagged the Australian, French and US Championships. It was revealed later that Chris was playing with an upset stomach.

Kathy, who stormed into the quarter final with the reputation of a giant killer, saw herself facing that grand old woman of Wimbledon, Billie Jean King. King, who has so far bagged 20 Wimbledon titles, thundered past Kathy Jordan 7-5, 6-1 to enter the semi final. But the 39-year-old American, with the never-say-die spirit, was no match in speed and precision to 18-year-old Andrea Jaeger. Andrea, who was born two years after King made her first appearance at Wimbledon, literally annihilated her 6-1, 6-1 in just 56 minutes.

Martina Navratilova, the Prague-born American, had little problem storming past South Africa's Yvonne Vermaak 6-1, 6-1 in the other semi final.

In another one-sided final the 26-year-old Martina comprehensively defeated Andrea Jaeger 6-0, 6-3 in 54 minutes to retain her crown which she had won in 1975, 1979 and 1982. Andrea, who was the youngest finalist since Maureen Connolly (USA) in 1952, had no answers to the champion's superior serve, volleys and superb volleys.

Like McEnroe, Martina also bagged the doubles title in partnership with Pam Shriver. They beat Rosie Casals of USA and



*Above: Martina Navratilova*



*Below: Andrea Jaeger*

Wendy Turnbull of Australia 6-2, 6-2, in 49 minutes, to claim the title for the third time in a row.

It was a pity that none of the Indian players could go beyond the first round. Vijay Amritraj, that fine Wimbledon prospect, was eliminated by the unseeded Mark Edmondson of Australia. Shashi Menon and Ramesh Krishnan were similarly edged out at their very first appearance, thus snuffing out India's chances at the Wimbledon. Of course, Ramesh Krishnan had the satisfaction of presenting a grim live set fight against eighth seeded Vitas Gerulaitis of the U.S.A.

Radhakrishna Pillai

## SAY CHEE...EE...SE!

*(See facing page)*

Clockwise from top, left LOOKOUT These two rare Canadian Timber Wolf cubs in Port Lempue Zoo lost their mother soon after they were born, but have grown up fast. HOTEL FOR DOGS Waitress Joy Atkinson serves Elsa, a canine guest at Hathersage Inn in Derbyshire, owned by hotelier David Bowie. JOY RIDE Mandy the Jack Russel Terrier, has perched herself on her master Ray Roche's shoulders for a better view of the sights around! BIRD IN HAND is a Little Tern Chick. The Little Terns are among Britain's rarest birds. PUPPY LOVE Keepers at Longest Safari Park had named her Laddie, taking her to be a male Californian sea lion, till she gave birth to a pup. ROOM AT THE TOP Yes, but only for one! So these cygnets take turns for a lift from their mother as she sweeps round the lake in Chertsey.

(ASIA FEATURES)

CHILDREN'S WORLD



# A Tale of Two Brothers

"Mountains, great mountains,  
How high do they stand!  
They are more than  
Mere rocks and sand.

They are so great  
They overcome the wind,  
And the strong storms  
Are nothing to them."

**E**LEVEN-year-old Varun Nangia wrote these lines while he was on a visit to Gauhati in May last year. He and his five-year-old brother, Arun — both students of Delhi — were on a holiday there along with their mother and grandfather. They thoroughly enjoyed the first few days in Gauhati, especially their first sights of the mountains, about which Varun wrote excitedly to his father back home. They also saw the Brahmaputra, and did not forget to throw coins into its turbulent waters, Varun recounted in his letter. On reading their letters, Mr. Nangia missed his children very much. How could he have imagined then that he was soon to part with them for ever?

"Tragic End to Holiday in Gauhati" ran the newspaper headline, and the story below was that of Varun and Arun, how they were fatally hit by a truck as they were walking down a footpath in the company of their mother and maternal aunt. The tragedy took place on June 10.

Varun and Arun were the only children of their parents. Their father is an engineer and mother an English teacher



Varun

Arun

in a school. Overcome by shock, it took them nearly a year of sorrow-filled days to trace their way to the offices of "Children's World". They carried with them a sheaf of papers, containing a dozen poems written by Varun.

In a voice hushed down by sorrow and washed with bravely held tears, they told us about Varun and Arun. They were both intelligent, gifted children. While Varun was in Class 7, Arun was in the Preparatory. Varun's hobbies were collecting stamps, coins and stickers, cricket and roller-skating. He was a voracious reader and had a good collection of books and magazines in the home library he maintained. Even while riding pillion on his father's scooter, he would quietly open a book and try to snatch a few "breezy" paragraphs. He studied all by himself, and never wanted any tuition at home. He had a knack of participating in all sorts of competitions and winning prizes, too! A shy child, Varun was kind at heart and was never shy in parting with his pocket-money to help the poor.

Unlike his brother, Arun was a cheerful, gay child. He gave expression to his

feelings by indulging in painting, and he would always use very bright colours. Arun was equally keen about his studies, like his brother.

The Nangias recollected how Varun had taken to composing poems a week or so before he left for Gauhati. And the ten or twelve poems that he wrote were the only ones he attempted during those few days.

In a poem entitled "Candle", Varun asks: "Why do you burn? Don't you get hurt? You are brave to tolerate burning fire. Still, I would ask, what is your desire?" He calls flowers "wonderful" and mentions their "power to attract people; they halt to see you whether you are strong or feeble." "Rain" comes

"dancing and brings joy with it. It's a great season; all feel happy and they celebrate it (rain). As it stops, all feel bad, and the weather just goes mad". Rubik's "Cube" for him is a "crazy game, a crazy toy!" To Earth, he asks, "how strong you are, to hold everything? What food do you eat that gives you so much strength?" In another poem, he describes the "meeting" of lions, elephants, and snakes, and in yet another poem, he tells us about "a jack who used to ride on a donkey's back".

We echo his parents' words: had Varun lived for more years, probably he would have made a name for himself as a poet.

Ark

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# JUGGLE-A-WORD

**M**OST children hate the word "Examination". But they all love to participate in competitions — little remembering that examination, too, is something like a competition. The new academic year has just started, and examinations are, for the time being, far away. Maybe you are already getting ready to take part in some competition or other. So, here's a competition to find out how many other words "live in" the word **Competition!** Sharpen your pencil, keep your dictionary by your side, and get a crack at "**COMPETITION**".

The rules are the same as for our earlier Juggle-a-Word Game (October 1982)

1. No proper nouns are allowed
2. No single letter word will be considered (This is a new rule)
3. No word may be used in its singular and plural forms as two separate words
4. No letters may be added from 'outside' the given word. The same letter may not be used twice or more if it occurs only once in the given word
5. No short form or abbreviations of words or their archaic forms will be allowed
6. This time the minimum number of words will be 30. All those who make more than 30 words may send their answers in an envelope marked **Juggle-a-Word Game, Children's World, 4 Bahadur Shah Zafar**

**Marg, New Delhi 110002.**

7. Each entry has to be accompanied by the coupon printed on this page. Cut out, fill the details, and affix it on the sheet of paper on which you write the words.

8. The entry with the maximum number of words, above 30, will receive a cash award of Rs. 25, which can also be converted into a year's subscription for "Children's World". In case of a tie, the prize money will be divided equally.

9. All entries must reach the Editor by September 15, 1983

**Nirmala Malhotra**

## CORRECTION

In the result of the first Juggle-a-Word published in our July issue, the word for the game was given, inadvertently, as **INCONSISTENT**, instead of **INSISTENT**. The 100 word result is, therefore, withdrawn.

The correct answer is, E, En, I, In, Inn, Inset, Insist, Intent, Is, It, Ne, Ness, Nest, Net, Nett, Nue, Nisei, Nisi, Nit, Sei, Semit, Sent, Set, Sett, Si, Sm, Sine, Sit, Site, Stein, Stet, Stut, Te, Ten, Temus, Tent, Teste, Testis, Ti, Tie, Tin, Tine, Tiniest, Tint, Tit, Titi

Devika Rangachari, of Chanakyapuri, New Delhi, with 42 correct words, is declared the winner. Congratulations, Devika!

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>JUGGLE-A-WORD COUPON</b></p> <p>NAME: _____</p> <p>ADDRESS: _____</p> <p>CITY: _____</p> <p>STATE: _____</p> <p>POSTAL CODE: _____</p>	<p>DATE: _____</p> <p>TIME: _____</p> <p>BY: _____</p>
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# Jeevan and Hanu communicate about THOSE TALKATIVE ANIMALS

Fire ants communicate with different odours produced by special glands. A slow-fading smell marks a route to food, a quick-fading smell warns of danger. Another odour identifies a fire-ant to others in the community, and yet another calls for a 'general' meeting — without alarm.



Over 2,000 kinds of lightning bugs exist — beetles that emit different kinds of light. Special nerves switch 'on' a glowing chemical. These lights are used as 'courting' signals. Each of the 2,000 varieties has its own lighting language, avoiding confusion. The flashes also help scare away enemies.



The knife fish creates an electrical charge in surrounding water. Other knife fishes sense this charge as sound, with musical 'notes' in complex combinations and subtle rhythms. Scientists are trying to understand this puzzling musical language.

Fireflies are sending sound waves too high for humans to hear. Small abdominal air openings narrow and widen to vary the pitch (like whistling). Sensitive hairs on the backside pick up these sounds, which usually communicate an invitation to a feast — at a newly-discovered food source.



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# POPPINS TANTRA

Ram and Shyam  
have a tale to tell,  
Listen kids  
and listen well.



PARLE



A mouse to an elephant said,  
"What's the difference between me and you?  
You're black with a tail and four legs,  
It's exactly the same with me too".

The elephant merely laughed in contempt,  
"Hey pal, I've found my match in you.  
You really are so clever and bright,  
Let's shake on that, come on, do".

But seeing the elephant's huge hand,  
The mouse to his hole he fled,  
For the elephant's goodness and strength  
Filled him with horror and dread.

So quality, dear friends, don't you see,  
Is really what matters at all.  
Fakes give tummy-aches and more  
While Poppins above all stand tall.



So just don't let fakes fool you ever,  
And you know there are so many around.  
Only Poppins have silver-striped covers,  
Only Poppins in excellence abound.

# CHILDREN'S world

SEPTEMBER 1983



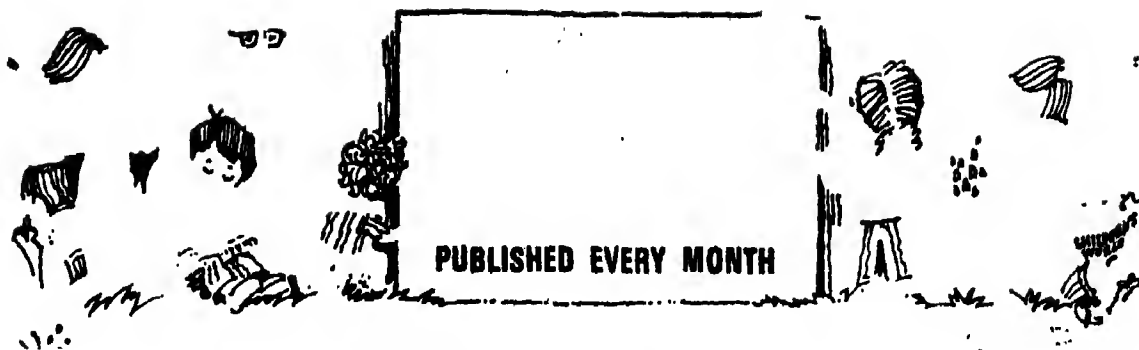
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Cover of the Month: Transparency by  
Rajinder Kumar Wadhwa

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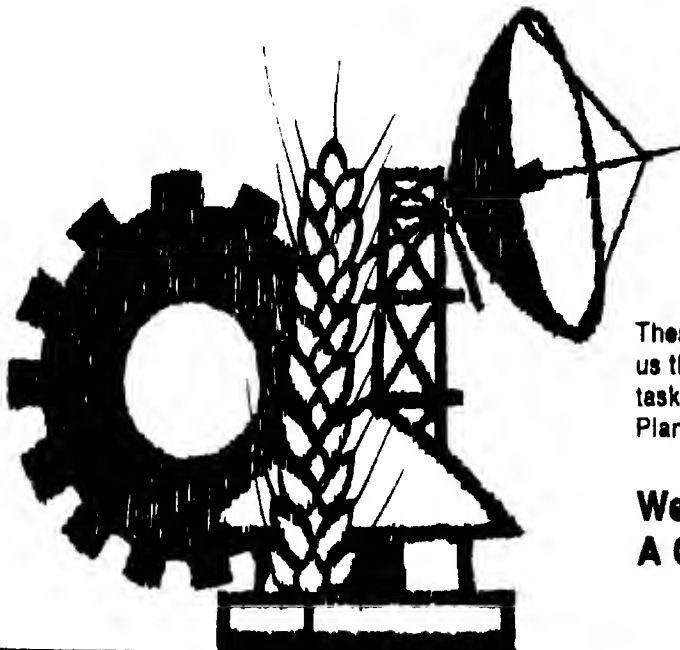


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davp 83/120

Dear Editor,

I am new to *Children's World*. I found it interesting. Our teachers sometimes ask us to give some entertainment. It will be very useful if you could publish some short plays

A. Thomas Kumar, Ooty

The stories, essays and photographs are so neat to look at. "On the Kidnappers' Trail" is one of the best stories I have read in *Children's World*. Please give us more such stories

Maddala Parameswara Rao, Anakapally

Congratulations for publishing "Puzzles with Prize". The story "Inseparables" was most interesting. I wish there were more descriptions of Kozhikode Palace ("On the Kidnappers' Trail"). Is it really existing?

Sukumar Bhoi, Sambalpur

The story "The Victory" in your August issue was very nice. The role of Anil is so cumulative. More such stories, please.

V. Anil Kumar, Neyveli

Why don't you publish "Kapish" any longer? Have you run out of ideas? I just love Kapish. I wait for every issue, eagerly hoping that you will publish "Kapish". I am missing Kapish and his friends.

Saileshwar Krishnamurthy, Kalpakkam

I am very happy that I became a regular subscriber of *Children's World*. I have induced many of my friends to read the magazine and they are all of the opinion that it is the best magazine around these days. We are glad that you have begun a new series on flowers. Please begin 'Pen-friends Corner' once again.

S.N. Jyothi, Neyveli

Stars fascinate children very much. I request you to have a regular informative column on the subject. Your magazine is

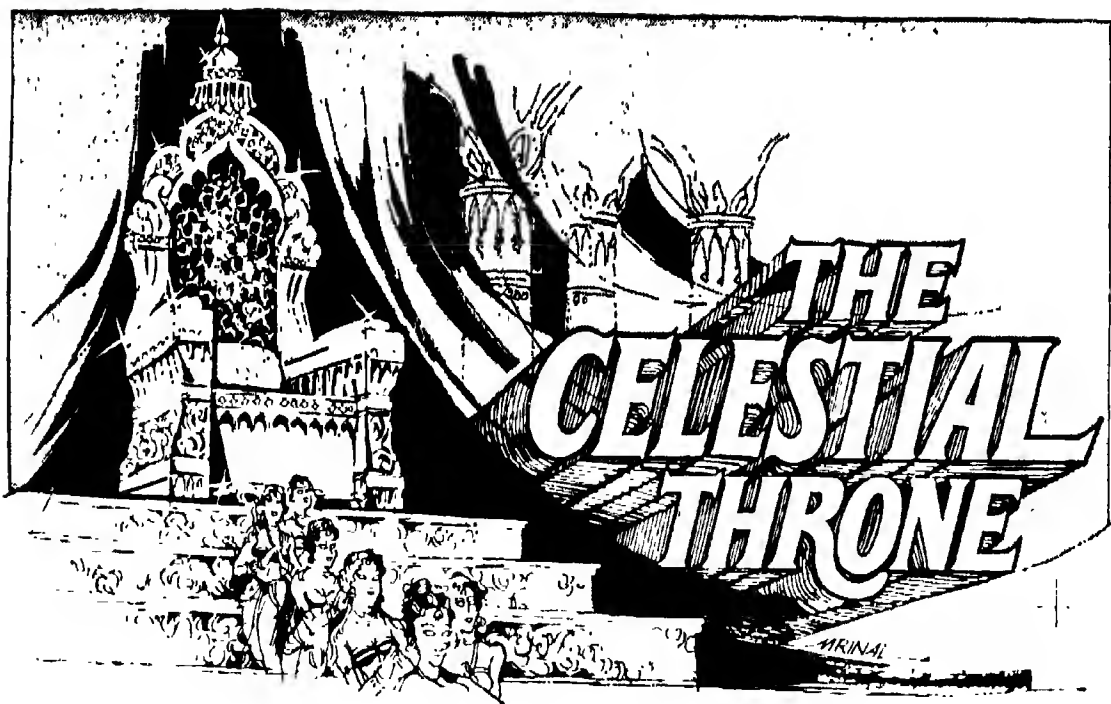
loved crazily by children.

Vandana, Chandigarh

Dear Readers,

We were silent about "Kapish", though we had received several letters asking us why the feature had failed to appear and whether we would not be bringing it back. It is not as though the contributors (Rang Rekha Features) had run short of ideas, as Saileshwar from Kalpakkam asks. Our contract for that item was over and, therefore, we had to go in for something else. We are happy to find that "Inspector Garud" has generally been found acceptable by our readers. This month, we start a new episode. It is as absorbing as the previous two stories. You will notice that your other favourite "Ripley's Believe It or Not" does not appear in this issue. We are told by their distributors that the item will not be available for monthlies. What hard luck! Take it from us, we are equally disappointed. But we shall hopefully come out with something else, with a touch of science, from the November issue—which, you all know, will be our next Special Number. For those who had asked for more mystery stories, here's "The Third Eye". Sounds exciting, eh? The new series on "Parachuting" will, in about half-dozen instalments, take you through all the exercises for a perfect jump with all the adventure it calls for! We hope you will like the feature. We thought "COMPETITION" (the August Juggle-a-word) would prove to be tough-going for many of you. No, we have been proved wrong, from the several entries that have by now poured in. We put the minimum number of words as thirty, but have by now come across quite a few entries with three times that many words. Any challengers? Hurry up!

EDITOR



**K**ING BHOJA turned to the third doll, wondering if it would have a favourable opinion of him. Even if he wasn't as remarkable as the great Vikramaditya himself, he was a pretty good king, all said and done. But the doll spoke before he could say anything. "Vikramaditya was a noble king," said the doll, "the noblest king ever born!"

"Tell me why you should think so," said King Bhoja. "Aren't all good kings noble?"

"By no means!" replied the doll. "True nobility is something you are born with. It comes naturally, just as fragrance comes naturally to the champak, sweetness to the sugarcane, and beauty to the pearl. And the most important quality of a truly noble man is his ability to think of others as himself."

"What do you mean?" asked King Bhoja, looking perplexed.

"I mean, a truly noble man has no self-interest. His interest never clashes with that of another. Whether you do

him a favour or do a favour to one of his men, it's all the same to him."

"Please explain," said King Bhoja. "I've no use for abstract statements!"

"Then listen to my story," said the doll.

"Vikramaditya, as you know, was the richest of kings. There was nothing, by way of wealth, which he did not possess. One day, he sent for his ministers and asked them to make preparations for a great *vajna* and to invite everyone to it. 'I shall give away whatever anyone asks for at this *vajna*,' he announced. The ministers looked at him in wonder. The king had always been one for giving away things and making gifts, but this seemed like giving away the kingdom itself!

"Vikramaditya read their looks! 'What is the use of acquiring wealth if one does not use it well?' he told them. 'Look at the lakes! They store water for the use of others. Similarly, a good king stores wealth for the sake of his subjects.'

"And what, after you have given

away all?' ventured one of the ministers.

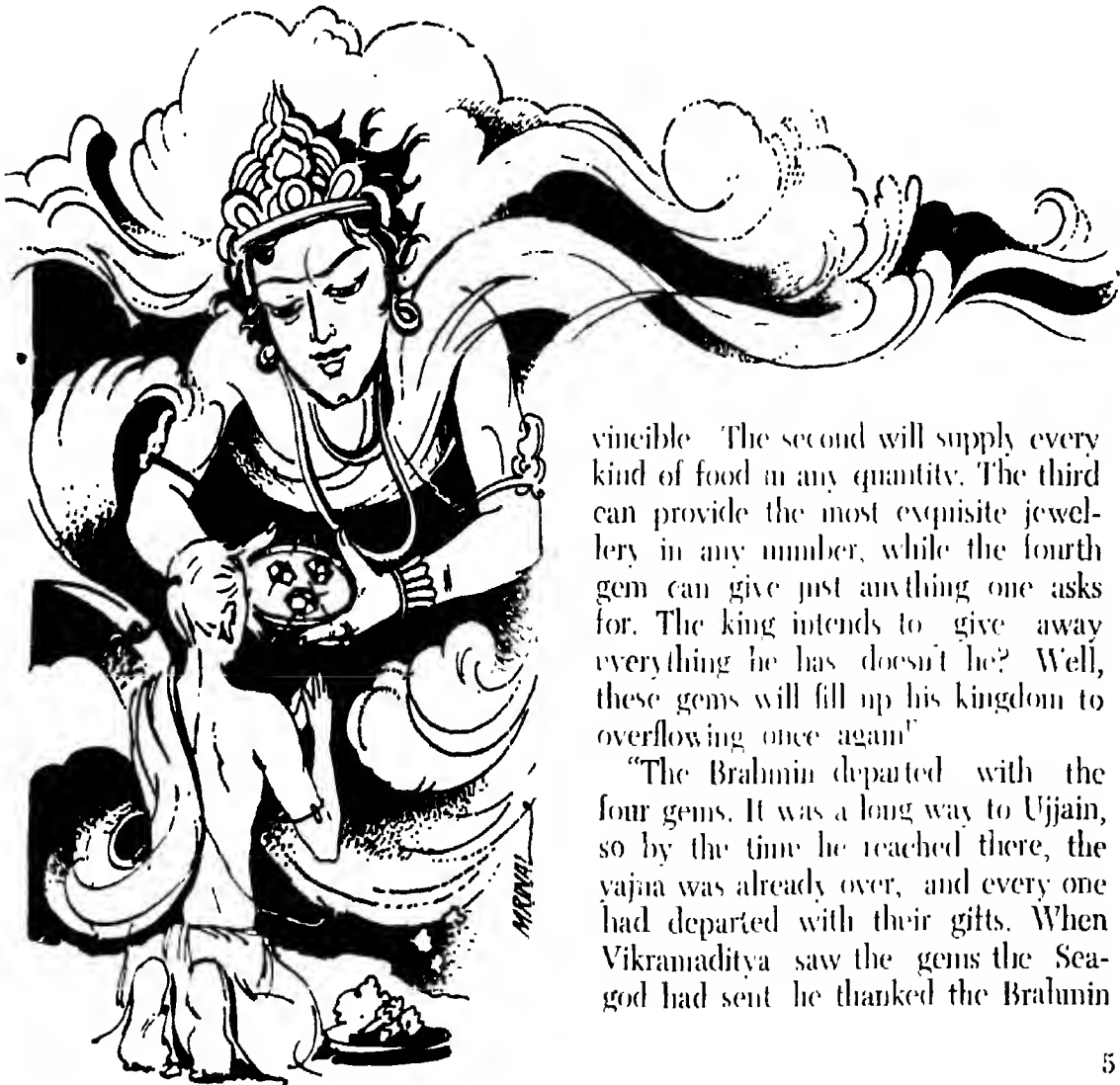
"Begin from scratch!" said Vikramaditya smiling. 'I'm a king after all!'

"So, a huge platform was built for the ceremony. Invitations went out far and wide, to angels, sages, yakshas, and gandharvas. The king sent his deputy to invite even the god of the Sea. No one was left out. The Brahmin who was deputed to invite the god of the Sea knelt on the shore and offered his homage. But nothing happened. Hurt and disappointed, he turned to go, when the Sea-god rose from the water. 'Wait,' he said, 'go and tell Vikramaditya, I am very happy that he remembered to invite me to his yajna. I would

certainly go if it were possible. But I cannot leave the water right now. Give him my regards and take these gifts for him.' He held out four gems to the Brahmin. They sparkled and glittered, throwing sun-like rays about them. The Brahmin gazed at the stones in awe. Never in his life had he seen anything so beautiful. 'What are these, my lord?' he asked the Sea-god.

"They're very special gems," he replied. 'I'll tell you their special qualities so that you may go and tell Vikramaditya.'

"The Brahmin looked at him expectantly. 'The first stone can manifest soldiers, horses, chariots, and weapons in any number and they will be all in-



vincible. The second will supply every kind of food in any quantity. The third can provide the most exquisite jewelry in any number, while the fourth gem can give just anything one asks for. The king intends to give away everything he has, doesn't he? Well, these gems will fill up his kingdom to overflowing once again."

"The Brahmin departed with the four gems. It was a long way to Ujjain, so by the time he reached there, the yajna was already over, and every one had departed with their gifts. When Vikramaditya saw the gems the Sea-god had sent, he thanked the Brahmin



and said, 'Well, since you missed your turn, I'd like you to take one of these gems. You may have your choice.' The Brahmin thanked him, but begged his permission to consult his family before making his choice. The king agreed.

"The Brahmin hurried home and told his family about the gems. 'Let's take the one which provides soldiers, horses, weapons, and chariots,' said his son at once. 'Then I can conquer lands with their help, and become a king myself!'

"'Now, don't be foolish,' said the Brahmin's wife, 'a kingdom does not necessarily mean happiness. Think of Lord Rama and the Pandavas, and what amount of trouble they had on account of their kingdoms. Let's have the gem that provides food, for no one can do without nourishment.'

"'Oh, no!' cried the daughter-in-law. 'Let's take the one that will give the jewellery. Just think how wonderful it would be to wear all the jewellery. Moreover, jewellery means wealth.'

"Each argued his own point and refused to listen to the others. At last, the Brahmin went back to the king and told him what happened at home. 'I'd be grateful if your majesty gives me the gem of your choice,' he said.

"Vikramaditya smiled and gave him all the four gems. 'There you are!' he said to the astonished Brahmin. 'Now you need not argue any more!'

The doll turned to King Bhoja. 'Well, Bhojaraj!' it said. 'Had the gems been given to you, would you have given them away so readily? Have you that much generosity in you?'

Seeing him silent, a fourth doll told him another story of Vikramaditya's generosity. 'King Vikramaditya,' said the doll, 'entertained whoever came to

his court. One day, a man came along. He was a dealer in gems. He presented an exquisite gem to the king. Vikramaditya, who had never seen a gem like that, sent for the royal jewellers to ascertain its value. They examined the gem very carefully and declared it to be priceless. The king was pleased and paid the dealer six thousand gold coins, which the royal jewellers said was a fair amount for the gem. The king asked the dealer if he had any more similar gems. 'Oh yes,' he replied. 'I've ten more at home, which I'd be very happy to sell to you.'



"Vikramaditya paid him in advance for all the ten gems and sent one of his jewellers with him to fetch them. "You must return with the gems within eight days," said the king to the royal jeweller, 'there'll be a reward if you do.'

"I will," said the jeweller, 'and please punish me if I fail.'

"The merchant handed over the ten gems to the royal jeweller, but he could not proceed much on his way. The monsoon had set in and it was impossible to cross one of the rivers on the way. None of the boatmen would take a risk. The jeweller pleaded with them in vain. 'Why do you want to cross the river right now?' asked one boatman.

"I've to reach the king," said the jeweller. 'I am carrying ten gems for him.'

"Well, I'll risk my life and take you across, if you give me five of the gems," said the boatman, 'but NOT otherwise.'

"The jeweller agreed, and just managed to cross the river in one piece. He rushed to the king's court.

"Vikramaditya was surprised when he saw only five gems. 'I had paid for ten!' he said. 'Where are the other five?'

"The royal jeweller then told his story. 'You're a brave and loyal man,' said Vikramaditya, pleased with him, and he gave him all the five gems as his reward!

The doll paused and gave King Bhoja a side-long glance. "Tell me, Bhojaraj! Would you have done the same if the gems had been yours?"

King Bhoja heard the question but was already lost in contemplation.

Bublee

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*Continued from page 56*

### **Fake revealed**

They checked their theories by doing some tests on objects of known age. Egyptian mummies were the first to be tried. Sure enough, the 'clock' worked perfectly, to within 30 years either way — pretty close when you're dealing in thousands of years!

Then came a nasty moment. One object of known date gave a Carbon 14 reading that suggested it was only a few years old. Was the theory wrong?

No — but the object was. Careful cross-checking revealed a fake

One of the first archaeological 'finds' to be checked, once the accuracy of the Carbon 14 'clock' was proved, was the famous Dead Sea Scrolls cache, discovered in the late '40s.

The clock confirmed the archaeologist's estimates of the Scrolls' age — and a new, modern tool for archaeology was in use.

What about objects of an age so great that all the Carbon 14 has gone? Other elements can be used, including argon, strontium, and uranium.

(First Features)



*Dear doofs and daffs,*

In all that talk about rain and mystery books the last time, I quite forgot to tell you how Raghu came back home. You remember he had gone on a holiday and wanted my football and we had — I would not call it a fight (after all we are gentlemen, aren't we?) but a small disagreement, yes, that's right, a disagreement, a difference of opinion.

Well, summer without Raghu was without any shade. Undiluted mothering and all that. After about two days of being good, clean, Raghu-less, I felt as if the heat was buttoning up my winter overcoat the whole time, you know

that feeling — of being choked and stuffed. I had awful visions of becoming another **THING**. I thought my ears would stay forever pink. And my knees — good gracious, I could almost see the skin on them.

Two days more and I felt myself dwindling rapidly into Virtue. I remembered to close all the bathroom taps, to put off the fan when I left the room — I even — I shudder to think of it — I even swept my room!

I don't know what would have happened if on the fifth non-Raghu day, I hadn't heard a faint shout outside my window. I leaned out, saw nothing. I had half hoped, or just a quarter hoped

that . . . . hey — there it was again. I leaned out once again. Nothing. And then from behind the jasmine bush emerged a dark head streaked white with whitewash and a dirty face that looked as if it had made great friends with coal.

"Raghu," I called, astonished.

"Shsh!" he said. "You turnip! Do you want them all coming out?"

"Who's them?" I asked. But he did not bother to answer. Instead, he took some soft mud from under the bush and rubbed them on his arms.

"What on earth . . . . ." I began. (Earth was right, wasn't it?)

"Shsh!" he said again savagely. "I'm disguising myself." And then he made a fierce face at me to show that I should not scream or anything, and then he

tried to jump into the room. Through the window, I mean. I couldn't, for the wits of me, understand why he had to jump into my room, instead of coming in the normal way, through the door. But, then, that is always Raghu. Expert at doing the simplest thing the most difficult way, like crossing a swollen river, not by going over the bridge but by sailing over it on an examination board.

Anyway, after two or three times, after every flower pot within ten miles got knocked down, Raghu was in the room. He looked decidedly peculiar; he was wearing something that looked like a baby elephant's pyjamas, and a shirt that smelt like a dinosaur. (They never washed, did they?) His feet . . . . .

"Stop staring," hissed Raghu. "And hide me."



JAYAGARAJA JAIKRISHNA PUBLIC LIBRARY.

"But... why... what..." I stammered.

"Listen," he said, his eyes gleaming under all the muck he had put on his face. "Listen, I have run away, okay? I couldn't stand it there. My mother doesn't know, so... help. They seem to be coming. Don't say a word." And, then, he dived into the cupboard, and I heard all the cloth hangers fall on him one by one.

I ran to the window. I couldn't see anyone, but I could certainly hear Baby's high, silly voice and the bump, bump of a suitcase. I had to act quickly.

I snatched up a handkerchief, my father's actually, and tied it round my head. I then sat down at my desk, drumming my fingers and humming a song, my eyes dreamy, I hoped, and far away. I had seen pictures of poets

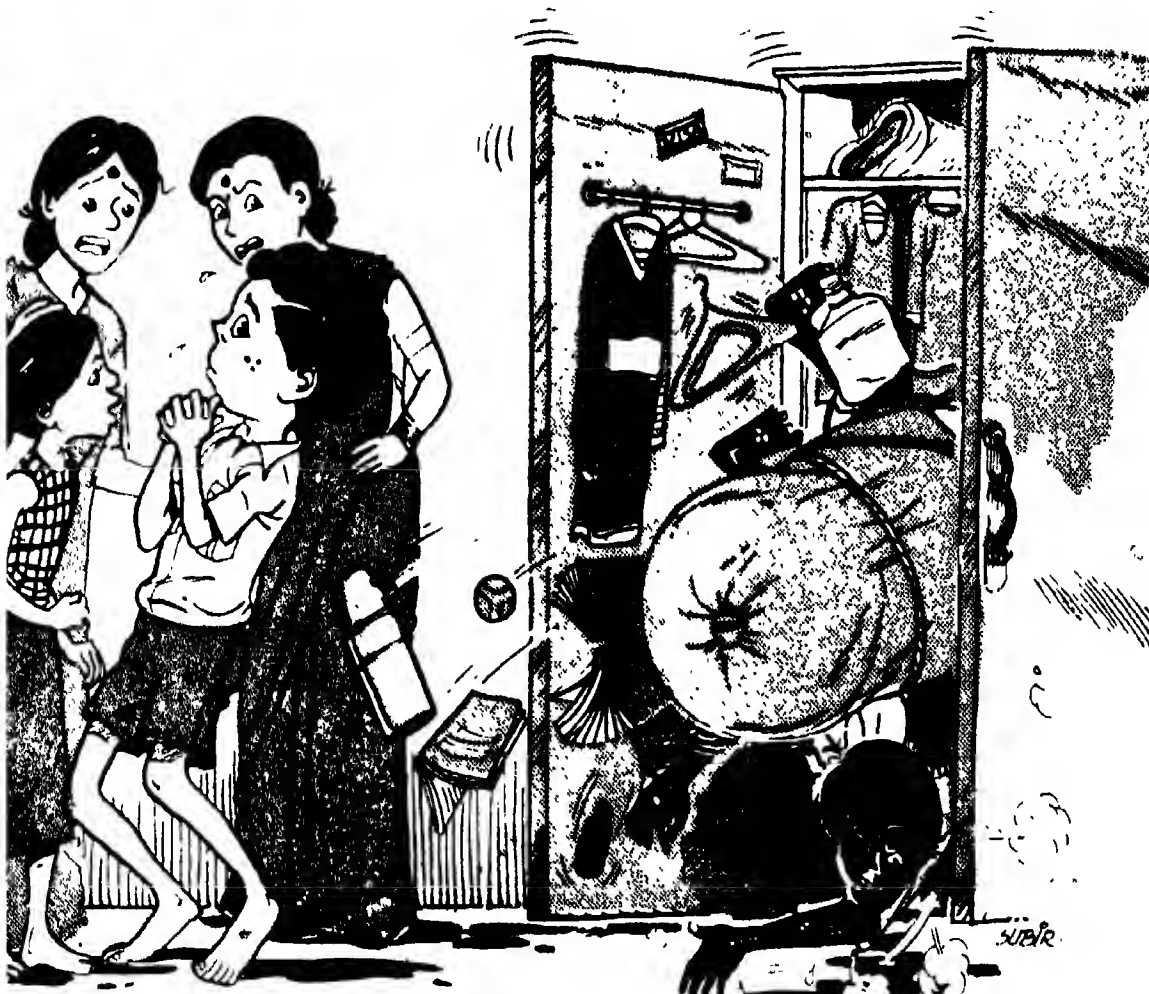
like that.

I was just putting my first finger under my chin to show deep thinking, when they burst in—the mothers (2), the sister (1), the brother (1), and the suitcase (1 large, bump, bumpity, bump).

"Hello, aunty," I said. I had my lines ready, I didn't miss a word of it. "Hello Baby, sorry Rita. Hello mum. Hello..."

"Where is Raghu?" his mother asked in a grim voice. I must confess I felt a little afraid of her "WHERE IS RAGHU?"

"Raghu?" I asked. Surprised, you know, puzzled, curious,—Raghu? How, I mean, why, what. And then just as I was thinking of saying, "When Raghu?" which would have been quite brilliant, there was a resounding crash in the cupboard. The door flew open, and out



rolled the quilt and the blanket which had been stored on the top shelf, a hot water bottle empty, thank goodness, last year's school books, and Raghu with a pair of shoes around his neck. And out also shot him, like a streak of black and white lightning.

"Raghu!" screamed his mother.

"Raghu!" shrieked mine.

"Raghu!" squeaked Baby.

"Lini," shouted my brother, just to be different.

I alone said nothing. It was out of my hands. Finished. I had tried so hard to shield my old friend from the hands of law (and Lini), but ....

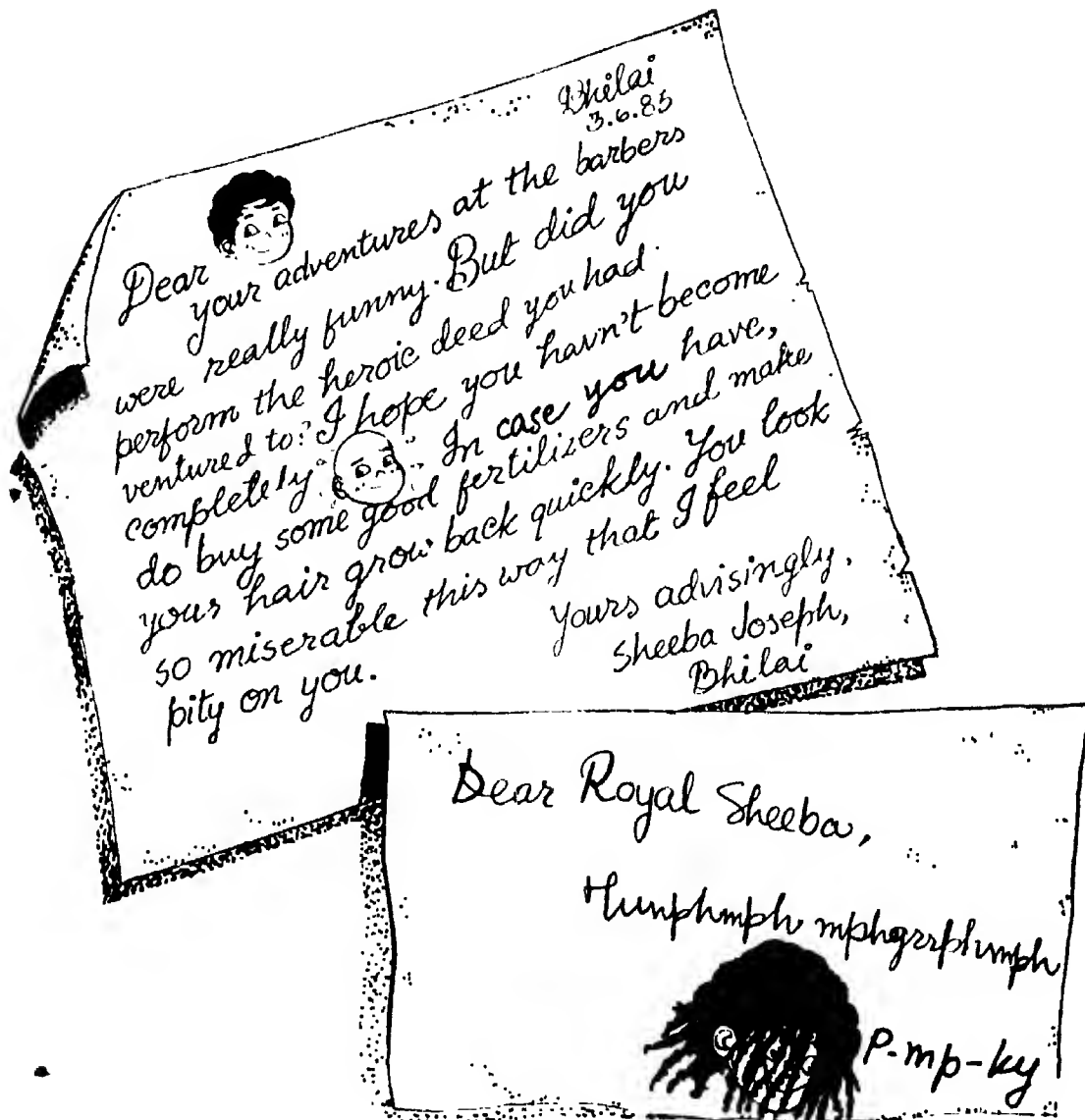
They led him away like a prisoner. Baby held her nose the whole way, Raghu told me later.

As for him, Raghu would not smile at her for a whole fortnight. Till I made him happier with her, telling him she was the only one who had not seen through his disguise which was true.

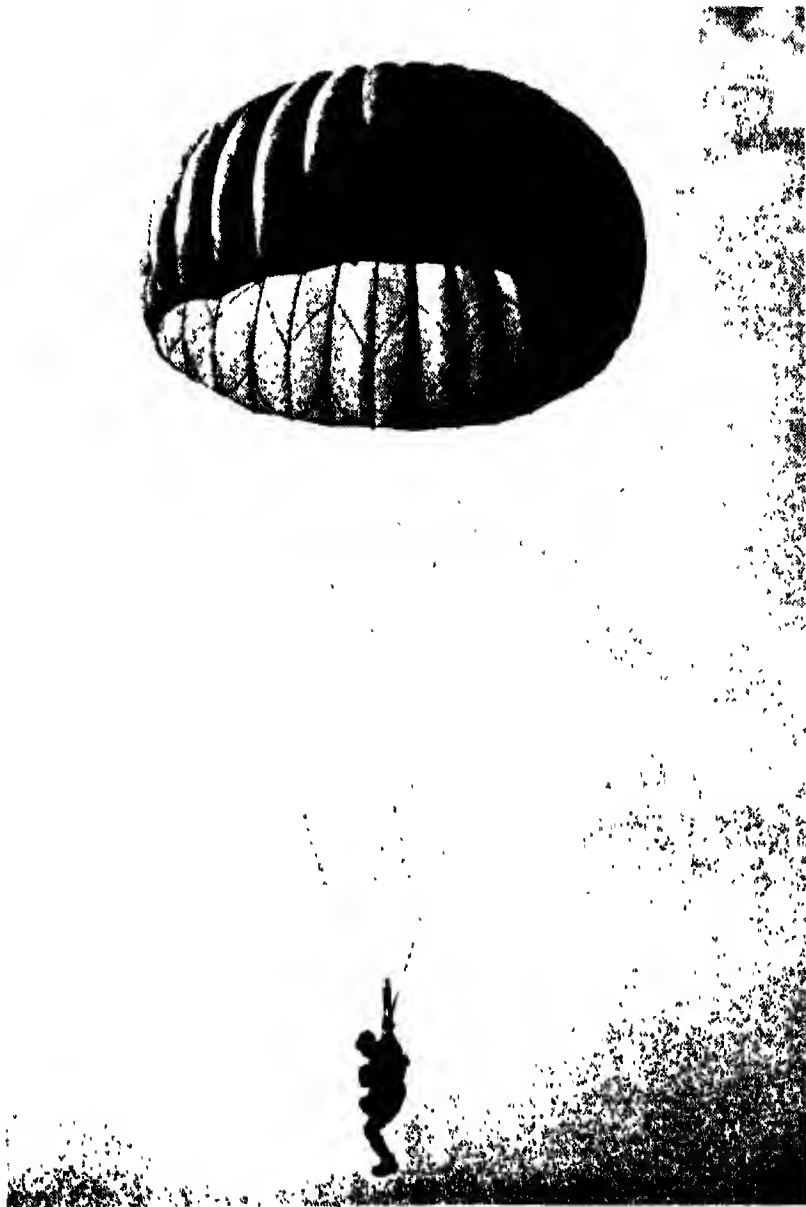
Which, I privately think, shows what a goofy cat she is....

*Yours in disguise*

*Ykrep*



# PARACHUTING



**P**SYCHIATRISTS say that man is born with two instincts: to suckle and to avoid falling. Also with two basic fears: the fear of loud noise and the fear of falling. Many of us would have woken up, frightened by a loud noise or a nightmare that we were falling from a great height.

Parachuting involves both these

basic fears. In this series, I shall dwell on the adventurous spirit of man that has made one of his dreams come true—the dream of flying in space without any aid and landing safely on the ground. This is the beginning of the story of the parachute and paratroopers.

To begin with, the word Parachute

is a combination of the Italian prefix 'para' which means 'ward off', and 'chute' which in French stands for 'fall'. The very idea and concept of a parachute must have suggested itself to many men before it became a reality. In the 16th century, the Chinese are believed to have performed some acrobatics by jumping from clifftops with the aid of large umbrellas attached to their belts. But that, I presume, anyone after a shot of opium could do!

The credit for the actual invention of the parachute goes to a French man, Sebastian Le Normand, a professor of physics and chemistry, who gave practical shape to the parachute. On December 26, 1783, Sebastian descended in a parachute from the tower of the Montpellier Observatory. His parachute had a conical canvas canopy 14 feet in diameter and 6 feet in height. He himself sat in a wicker basket attached by cords to the canopy.

Initially these parachutes were used by balloonists. By 1795, people became professional para jumpers in Europe, and in 1797, a French balloonist drew a massive crowd when he came down in a parachute from a height of 800 feet above the ground level in London. These parachutes were very cumbersome and difficult to carry around. It was only by 1850 that a parachute that was manageable and could be folded was invented.

The first parachute descent from a moving plane was attempted by an American, Capt. Berny, in March 1912. The first woman to jump from an aircraft was, again, an American—Triny Broadmich—and that was in June 1913.

Prior to World War II, the Germans and Russians went for paratrooping in a big way. During one of their training manoeuvres in 1936, the Russians land-

ed a whole division of paratroopers, which is approximately 10,000 men. The first mass airborne attack in history took place on 20 May, 1941, when the Germans invaded the island of Crete. It was their first and last major airborne operation. In this operation, 15,000 of the best trained paratroopers were employed. The operation was a major success, but due to poor planning, more than 4,000 paratroopers lost their lives, and the whole structure of the German airborne forces was so shattered that no major airborne operation could be undertaken throughout the War. The Allies made a shaky start in the field, but later they made intensive and varied use of their airborne forces, namely in Normandy, Arnhem, and for the Rhine crossing.

All paratroopers are essentially volunteers. The famous adage still holds good: 'paratroopers are men apart; every man an emperor!' And this is no idle gossip—it is to be seen to be believed. The spirit of camaraderie that binds paratroopers is obvious from this conversation between Field Marshal Montgomery and his batman. One fine morning, the Field Marshal was shaving when he nicked his chin. The blood oozing out began dripping to the floor. The Field Marshal's batman, who was watching, remarked, "Sir, why can't the colour of our berets be the colour of the blood? After all, the tank guys wear black berets; the infantry wear the rifle green beret; the services wear blue beret; the police guys wear khaki beret; and since we are a clan, a blood by ourselves, why not identify ourselves by a maroon beret."

Thus was born the Maroon Beret.

Mukesh Chopra

(To be continued)



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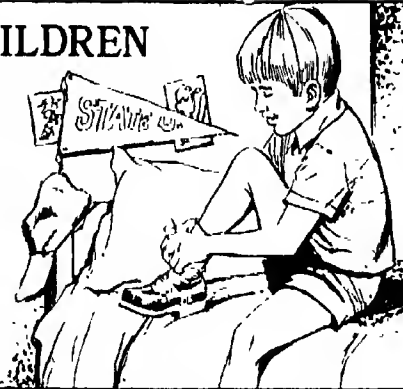
**Vitamin - enriched Maltova: for health, strength and energy**

SIMOE 01.1N 83

## TALES FOR CHILDREN

### A GIFT FOR TED

TED WAS COMING HOME FROM COLLEGE. BILLY COULDN'T WAIT TO SEE HIS BIG BROTHER AFTER SUCH A LONG TIME, ESPECIALLY SINCE ALL HIS FAVORITE THINGS CAME FROM TED, LIKE THE STATE UNIVERSITY BANNER HANGING OVER HIS BED.



...AND THE FOOTBALL THAT TED HIMSELF HAD CARRIED ACROSS THE GOAL LINE FOR THE TOUCHDOWN THAT WON THE CHAMPIONSHIP FOR STATE UNIVERSITY. TED WAS CERTAINLY A WONDERFUL BIG BROTHER, AND THIS GAVE BILLY A PROBLEM!



TED HAD GIVEN BILLY SO MANY NICE THINGS—NOW WHAT COULD BILLY GIVE TO TED? HE COULD BUY HIM A NICE GIFT WITH SOME OF THE PENNIES HE HAD SAVED, BUT WHAT WOULD TED LIKE?



HE HAD ONLY 4 DAYS TO FIND OUT, 'CAUSE SATURDAY WAS THE DAY DAD WOULD MEET TED'S TRAIN AT THE STATION.



BILLY GOT HIS FIRST IDEA WHEN HE HEARD HIS MOTHER TALKING ON THE PHONE TO ONE OF HER FRIENDS. "TED WAS ALWAYS AS SMART AS A FOX," HIS MOTHER SAID. NOW ALL BILLY HAD TO DO WAS FIND OUT WHAT A FOX WOULD LIKE, AND SURELY TED WOULD LIKE THE SAME THING!

HE RAN QUICKLY OUT TO SEE HIS FRIEND MR. JARRETT, THE MAN WHO TOOK CARE OF SOME OF THE GARDENS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. "WHAT WOULD A FOX LIKE, MR. JARRETT?" HE ASKED. HIS FRIEND LOOKED AT HIM A LITTLE CONFUSED BY THE QUESTION. "IF YOU WERE GOING TO BUY A FOX A PRESENT, WHAT WOULD YOU BUY HIM?" ASKED BILLY.



"A FOX? WELL, LET ME SEE. A FARMER FRIEND OF MINE TOLD ME THE TROUBLE HE HAS KEEPING A FOX OUT OF HIS CHICKEN COOP, SO I GUESS THE BEST PRESENT FOR A FOX WOULD BE A CHICKEN." "THANKS, MR. JARRETT. THANKS A LOT," SAID BILLY AS HE RAN BACK HOME.



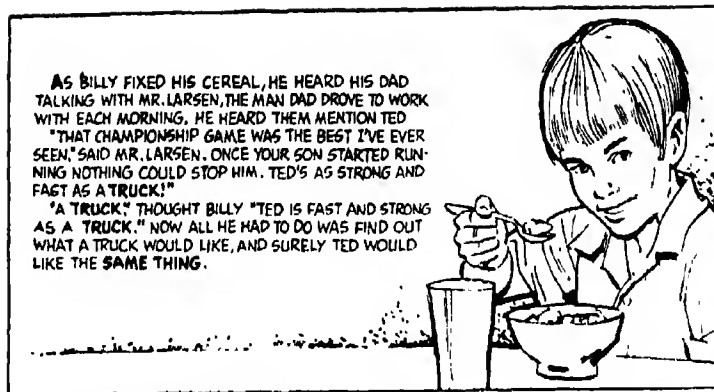
"MOM, WHERE CAN I BUY A CHICKEN? I WANT TO BUY A CHICKEN FOR TED." "IT'S NICE THAT YOU REMEMBERED HOW MUCH TED LOVES ROAST CHICKEN, BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY, BILLY. SEE I'VE ALREADY BOUGHT ONE."



THE NEXT MORNING BILLY GOT UP EARLY. TIME WAS GETTING SHORT AND HE STILL HAD NO IDEA WHAT HE COULD GET FOR TED DOWNSTAIRS. DAD WAS TALKING WITH MR. LARSEN.



STORY BY NICK JAEGLIN ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK BOHLE



AS BILLY FIXED HIS CEREAL, HE HEARD HIS DAD TALKING WITH MR. LARSEN, THE MAN DAD DROVE TO WORK WITH EACH MORNING. HE HEARD THEM MENTION TED "THAT CHAMPIONSHIP GAME WAS THE BEST I'VE EVER SEEN," SAID MR. LARSEN. "ONCE YOUR SON STARTED RUNNING NOTHING COULD STOP HIM. TED'S AS STRONG AND FAST AS A TRUCK!"

"A TRUCK," THOUGHT BILLY "TED IS FAST AND STRONG AS A TRUCK." NOW ALL HE HAD TO DO WAS FIND OUT WHAT A TRUCK WOULD LIKE, AND SURELY TED WOULD LIKE THE SAME THING.

BILLY FINISHED BREAKFAST AND WENT OUTSIDE TO FIND MR. JARRETT. HE FINALLY SAW HIS FRIEND CLIPPING HEDGES BY THE WESSEL HOUSE.

"MR. JARRETT," HE ASKED, "IF YOU WERE GOING TO BUY A PRESENT FOR A TRUCK, WHAT WOULD YOU BUY?"



"A TRUCK? A PRESENT FOR A TRUCK? WELL, I KNOW A TRUCK CAN'T RUN WITHOUT GAS, SO I GUESS THE BEST PRESENT FOR A TRUCK WOULD BE GASOLINE."

"THANK YOU," SHOUTED BILLY AS HE RAN BACK HOME. HE HAD TO CATCH DAD BEFORE HE LEFT FOR WORK WITH MR. LARSEN.



"DAD," HE CALLED, "CAN I GO WITH YOU TO BUY GASOLINE?"

"BOUGHT A TANKFUL YESTERDAY, BILLY. WE HAVE ALL WE NEED," DAD ANSWERED.



BILLY THOUGHT AND THOUGHT, BUT NO IDEA CAME TO HIM UNTIL FRIDAY WHEN GRAMMY CAME.

"FINISH YOUR MILK," SAID GRAMMY, "OR YOU'LL NEVER GROW TALL AND STRAIGHT AS A TREE LIKE YOUR BROTHER."

"TALL AS A TREE," THOUGHT BILLY. "TED'S AS TALL AS A TREE." NOW ALL HE HAD TO DO WAS FIND OUT WHAT A TREE WOULD LIKE, AND SURELY TED WOULD LIKE THE SAME THING.

HE GULPED DOWN THE REST OF HIS MILK AND RAN OUTSIDE TO LOOK FOR MR. JARRETT. HE SAW A BASKET FILLED WITH FRESHLY CUT GRASS IN FRONT OF THE HART HOUSE, SO HE FIGURED HIS FRIEND WOULD BE THERE. SURE ENOUGH, MR. JARRETT WALKED FROM THE BACK WITH ANOTHER BASKETFUL HE HAD JUST RAKED.

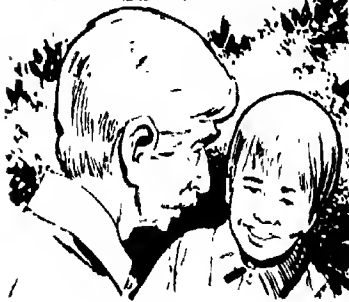


"THIS SHOULD BE AN EASY QUESTION FOR YOU, MR. JARRETT. IT'S ABOUT TREES, AND YOU KNOW MORE ABOUT TREES THAN ANYONE."



MR. JARRETT LAUGHED, "WELL, THANK YOU BILLY, I SURE HOPE I CAN HELP. WHAT IS YOUR QUESTION?"

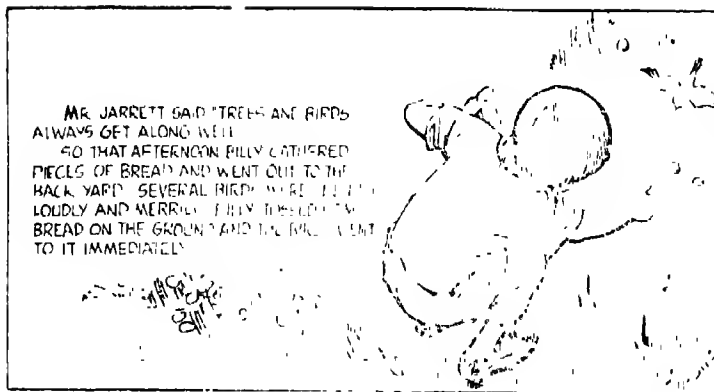
"WHAT DO TREES LIKE MOST?"



MR. JARRETT THOUGHT FOR A MOMENT, THEN LOOKED UP AT THE BIG OAK TREE OVER THEIR HEADS.

"THERE'S YOUR ANSWER," HE SAID, POINTING TO THE BIRDS PLAYING IN THE BEAUTIFUL BLANKET OF OAK LEAVES. "TREES AND BIRDS ALWAYS GET ALONG WELL. LOOK IN ALMOST ANY TREE AND SOONER OR LATER, YOU'LL SEE A BIRD."





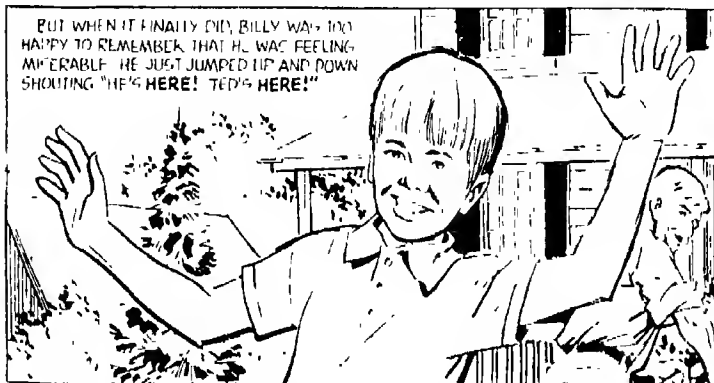
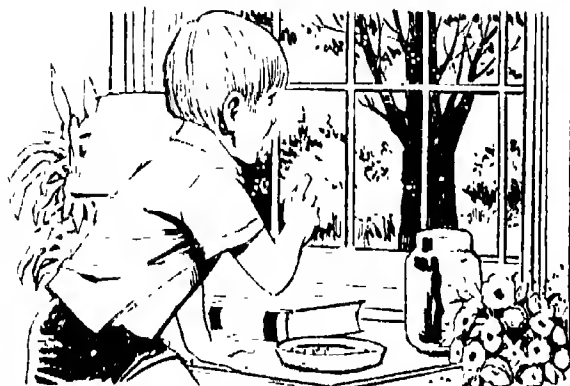
MR. JARRETT SAID "TREES AND BIRDS ALWAYS GET ALONG WELL."  
SO THAT AFTERNOON BILLY GATHERED PIECES OF BREAD AND WENT OUT TO THE BACK YARD. SEVERAL BIRDS WERE FEEDING LOUDLY AND MERRILY. BILLY THROSCED BREAD ON THE GROUND AND THE BIRDS WENT TO IT IMMEDIATELY.

"WHICH ONE OF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE A PRESENT FOR MY BROTHER?" BILLY ASKED. ONE BIRD LOOKED UP FOR A MOMENT, THEN WENT BACK TO EATING THE BREAD.



"WILL ONE OF YOU LIKE TO BE A PRESENT FOR MY BROTHER?" BILLY ASKED AGAIN. BUT THE BIRDS WERE RIGHT ON EATING. WHEN BILLY STARTED TO ASK AGAIN, THEY ALL JUST KEPT ON EATING.

BUT WHEN IT FINALLY DID, BILLY WAS TOO HAPPY TO REMEMBER THAT HE WAS FEELING MISERABLE. HE JUST JUMPED UP AND DOWN SHOUTING "HE'S HERE! TED'S HERE!"



"THAT'S WHAT I WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE," SAID TED AS HE LIFTED BILLY HIGH IN THE AIR, "A GREAT BIG HUG FROM MY LITTLE BROTHER."



"OH, I THOUGHT BILLY AS TED CARRIED HIM INTO THE HOUSE. 'THAT'S WHAT BIG BROTHERS LIKE ABOUT HUGS FROM LITTLE BROTHERS. I GUESS I GAVE TED THE RIGHT GIFT AFTER ALL."





### THE STORY SO FAR

Examinations over, Biju and Pratap and their friends decide to remind their master, Rajasekhar, of his promise of a picnic. 'Police' Appu—a nickname he earned for his daredevil acts—Smitha, Vinita, Gopi, and John accompany them to the Staff room. Smitha wants to go to the Dam. But that is rather far away. Appu mentions Kali Hills. But who will want to go there even in broad daylight? Rajasekhar suggests the ancient Koickal Palace, and tells them that their teacher, Sarada, too, will join them for the picnic.

On Sunday, the children are all excited as they get into the school bus. They forget themselves in singing and chatting till they reach Koickal Palace—an hour-and-a-half later. They all move about the 17th century Palace, and later, adjourn to the park around. After lunch, the children are allowed to roam about in the garden. Appu,

Pratap, Biju, and John reach the nearby forest from where they have a good view of the Kali Hills. John wonders why people are so scared of the hills. Pratap has a story to tell them: It appears the ancient temple was built by a sage. The idol depicted 'Bhadrakali' in an angry mood and was frightening to look at. Little wonder that nobody went there. The few who dared to go up the hill and the temple with any intention other than worship had all met with tragedy. Pratap adds that the place now only echoes strange noises. All this is "nonsense" to Appu. He assures his friends that he will one day go up the hill and show them that "these stories are just rubbish."

Soon it's time to go home. "We've had a nice time," remarks Appu, little knowing what is in store for them. As they board the bus, one of them is found missing—Vinita! She was last seen in the rose garden. Where

has she disappeared? Rajasekhar and some of the boys comb the garden, park, and the forest area around. There is no trace of the little girl. Rajasekhar stays back to continue the search and sends the others home with instructions to inform the headmaster, police, and Vinita's mother, Mrs. Panicker. She recovers from the initial shock and arranges for a telegram to go to her husband, a Customs official in Bombay. The police are duly alerted, and by the time they all settle down to think of further steps, Rajasekhar comes back. He has drawn a blank.

After a restless night, Appu reaches Pratap's house early next morning. The two are soon joined by Biju. They decide not to sit idle but think of a plan of action. They go to Koickal Palace, where they avoid being seen by their master, headmaster, and Vinita's mother. They make their way to another part of the Palace and come across a door they had not seen the previous day. They ask the guard to let them in. But he tells them, it is the place the Maharajah once used as his chamber and is not open to visitors. According to him, the lock had not been opened for several years. As the boys leave the place, they notice a bearded visitor to the guard and overhear a part of their conversation. Apparently, the man, "Anand Sahab", is not happy about the boys' presence there. Shankar the guard assures him there is nothing to worry. The three friends also notice that the lock on the door is shiny as though it is in use every day.

The owner of the teashop, where the boys go for a quick bite, does not know much about Anand, except that he is a frequent visitor. Yes, he was at the Palace the previous day! The boys go to the garden where Vinita was last seen. As they comb the area, Pratap picks up a blood-smeared handkerchief from the bushes. From their hiding place, they also see the door to the

chamber open and Shankar coming from inside! They watch him for a while, and then go back home.

The next morning, the three friends reach Vinita's house to find that her father has arrived from Bombay. Mr. Panicker introduces them to his old classmate, Mr. Khan, now Superintendent of Police, and continues to explain how the Customs people spread their net over a gang of antique smugglers and arrested one of them, Reddy, and recovered from him three idols and a lamp of great value. They tried to keep the arrest a top secret and so were puzzled when they began receiving telephone calls from influential persons to release him! They were able to get some details about the gang from Reddy. His interrogation was going on, Mr. Panicker says, when he received news of Vinita's disappearance and rushed home.

Mr. Khan feels that someone must be playing a prank to extort money, and that Vinita must be safe. He suggests they should wait for the Inspector to come back from the Palace. However, Mr. Panicker is impatient and Mr. Khan agrees to their proceeding to Koickal Palace once again. As they are about to get into Mr. Khan's car, he picks up an envelope. It is addressed to Mr. Panicker. On reading the contents, his face turns pale. The message says: "You release Reddy, we release Vinita".

Meanwhile, Appu, Biju, and Pratap on their way home are accosted by the proprietor of Vinod Studio. Mr. Vinod gives them some photographs to be handed to their master Rajasekhar. Who wants to see the picnic photos, and be reminded of a tragedy? Pratap keeps the envelope safe. At home, while he eats lunch, his sister Beena takes a look at the photos. There is a nice picture of Vinita running after a butterfly. But who's the bearded man behind her? Pratap has no difficulty in recognising him.

## CHAPTER 7 : Trapped !

**P**RATAP hurried through his lunch. He then went to his room and was all the while thinking about the photograph. Soon his two friends joined him. "Look at that chap, Biju," said Appu. "The thinktank!" He turned to Pratap and said, "Get up, this is not the age to sit back and think all the while. What's needed is ACTION! Let's get going."

"Where? What's our next plan?" asked Biju.

"Let's first make this thinktank get up from here!" remarked Appu. He bent forward to drag Pratap from his chair. It was then that he noticed the photograph in Pratap's hand. He snatched it from him.

"Oh, it's Vinita!"

Biju, who was looking at the photograph over Appu's shoulders, exclaimed, "Hey, isn't it that man? That man we saw there?"

Appu looked back. "Who? Which man? When?" He looked around.

"Look at that photograph, you 'police'!" Biju teased him.

Appu looked at the photograph once again and shouted, "Yes, it's the same man. What's his name? Yes, Anand."

"Now," said Pratap, "it's pretty clear that he is behind Vinita's disappearance. He must be the one who took her away. See, the photo shows him watching her intently. This must have been taken just before she was kidnapped. He must have taken her away through the bushes.

"It's also clear that he got hurt on his hand when he passed through the bushes, either when he went towards her or on his way back. He must have wiped his hand with his handkerchief and then thrown it away. That accounts for the bandage on his arm and the blood-stained kerchief. I've a hunch that he, with the help of that guard,

must be keeping her in that chamber. See how the details fit in!"

"Exactly!" agreed Appu. "Let's go to the Palace and rescue her before they do any harm to her!"

"No, Appu," said Pratap, "I don't think we can handle this all by ourselves. How can we force the guard to open the door? A wrong move might even endanger Vinita. No, I think we should go and tell Uncle Panicker and Mr. Khan all that we know."

"That's right. Let's go to Vinita's house," said Biju.

Appu had no choice but to go with them, although he would have preferred to go to the Palace and confront the criminals. Pratap kept the photograph safe in his pocket.

At Vinita's house, there was still a small crowd on the verandah as well as inside. Two or three policemen were also there.

The three boys went inside and met Mrs. Panicker. "Amity," said Pratap, "we came to see Uncle and Mr. Khan."

"But they're not here," she said. "They have gone to the Palace. I don't know what has happened to my Vinita!"

"Don't worry, Amity, she'll be back with us in a day or two," Appu said confidently.

"It's not as simple as you think," said Mrs. Panicker. "She's been kidnapped by a smuggler's gang."

"Smugglers? How do you know?" Pratap asked.

"You see, a few days back, Vinn's father had arrested a smuggler called Reddy in Bombay. Now it seems it's his men who have taken Vinn away. They left a message in Mr. Khan's ear. It said, 'Vinn will be released only if Reddy is allowed to go free,'" explained Mrs. Panicker.

"My god! This is then a very serious case!" Appu exclaimed. "What shall we do now?"

"Let Amty take rest. We'll now go, Amty. When Uncle comes, please tell him we were looking for him," said Pratap.

The boys stopped outside the gate. "What do we do now?" asked Biju. "There may be danger, too. If it's a smugglers' gang, they won't let her go easily."

"Yes, especially if their leader is under arrest," said Pratap.

"What do we do now?" asked Appu, and then answered the question himself. "Why not we go to the Palace straightway? We can meet Uncle and Mr. Khan there."

Both Biju and Pratap agreed and they all set off for the Palace. They had to wait for more than an hour before they got a bus. It was very crowded, and terribly hot inside. And it moved very slowly. The passen-

gers were getting impatient and shouted at the driver to go faster.

"There's some trouble with the engine," the driver said apologetically. "I'm not sure whether it'll take us to the destination at all!"

The bus went slower and slower. The engine coughed and sizzled for a while and then came to a dead stop. The driver tried hard to restart the engine, but in vain. The passengers cursed the driver and their own fate and got out of the bus. Some started walking, while others waited for the next bus.

Pratap and his friends waited in the shade of a tree a little away from the bus. "There's no sign of another bus," said Biju. "And it's also getting late. Unless we get a bus now, we won't be there before dark."

"There's no question of going back. We should go ahead and do whatever we can





to help the police," Appu was firm.

"That's right. We should try to meet Mr. Khan as early as possible," said Pratap.

Suddenly, Appu ran into the middle of the road and hailed a bullock-cart. "We need some help. Could you take us to Koi-kal Palace? It's urgent," Appu pleaded with a smile on his face.

The cart driver looked grim for a moment. Then he smiled and said, "Okay, boys, hop in."

The three were inside the cart in a flash. It moved forward. The road was smooth, and there was a gentle breeze blowing, but to the boys, the slow journey was quite boring. They were eager to reach the Palace fast.

About two furlongs from there the cart stopped. "Now I've to turn right here. You can walk up the rest of the way, can't you?" asked the driver.

"Yes, I suppose we can," said Pratap jumping out of the cart. "Thank you so much for the help."

The boys ran to the Palace. The place looked deserted. There was no one in sight, no vehicles either. It was dark, though it was only just past five, as there were clouds collecting in the sky. It looked as though it would rain.

They went up to the teashop where they had eaten the previous day. The shop owner gave them a smile of recognition. "Did some police officers come here today?" asked Pratap.

"Yes," said the man. "There was an officer and a few others. They came in a car. In fact, they left only about 15 minutes ago."

"What hard luck!" muttered Pratap, as they walked towards the Palace.

The boys had barely reached the main gate when it began to rain. They waited for the rain to stop. Their trip to the Palace had been in vain, as Mr. Khan had already left the place. And because of the rain, they could not also return to the village and try

to meet him there. The rain appeared in no mood to oblige them! They could not even walk back to the bus stand.

"The wind is blowing from the south," said Pratap. "It may be better if we go to the northern side of the Palace."

Appu had already started walking north. The others followed. They found that the northern side provided comparatively better shelter.

It was almost dark now. Appu walked to the north-east corner. He took a look at the door to the Maharajah's chambers without showing himself. The guard, Shankar, was nowhere to be seen. Was the door locked or not? He could not see very clearly. There was very little light. Biju had reached the spot by then. "What're you trying to find out?" he asked Appu.

"Shsh!" Appu whispered. "Do you think that door is locked?"

"I'm not sure; I can't see very well," said Biju.

Appu braved the rain and took a closer look at the door. He came back to his friends and said, "It's certainly not locked. But it looks as though it's bolted from inside."

"There's certainly something fishy there," said Pratap thoughtfully. "If only we could tell Mr. Khan about this! But, then, how're we going to get back? It's already dark and this wretched rain is in no mood to give up!"

"We're already so wet; why not run to the bus stop?" asked Biju and looked at Appu for support. There was no response from him. He was thinking of something else.

Without a word, Appu ran, no, not towards the bus stop! He ran to the mysterious door and pulled at it. As the other two watched in surprise, the door opened with a squeak. Appu gave the others a glance and went inside.

Pratap and Biju looked at each other won-



, dering what to do. Then they, too, went in. It was quite dark. As soon as they were inside, the door closed behind them. They turned back in surprise, but could not see anything.

"Don't jump!" Appu's whisper came to them from one side. "I closed the door."

The three stood near the wall. "What's the big idea, Appu?" asked Pratap, somewhat irritated. "We should have been going back home, instead of locking ourselves up in this room." Though he was talking in low whispers, they felt the whole room was reverberating with his voice.

"What's the big idea in going back?" Appu countered. "Here's a mystery possibly connected with Vinita's kidnapping. I'm trying to find out about it. I didn't ask you to come in with me. You can go home, the

door is still open."

"We're not going anywhere unless you come with us," said Pratap. "We came together, and we will remain together, come whatever may. If you're going to stay here, we too will do the same thing."

Biju, however, was not so sure. "What're we going to do here?" he asked. "Won't it create a scare in the village when three more of us are reported missing?"

"That's true," agreed Appu. "Our parents will surely be worried. But that's no reason why we should give up our efforts. Who knows, we may even be able to rescue Vinita!"

"Okay, Appu," said Pratap, "we're with you. If we're able to do something for Vinita, it doesn't matter even if we give our parents some anxiety for one night."

They were silent for a while. Then Pratap said, "Let me think of a plan. Have you got your torch, Appu?"

"Of course, I have," said Appu, taking out a pencil torch from his pocket. It was one of his precious possessions—a presentation from his father. Appu always carried it wherever he went.

"Well, that's something. Anyway, for the time being, we'll just wait. There must be someone inside somewhere. Let him show up or go out."

It was dark and silent all around them. As they were wet, they felt cold, too. Time seemed to stand still. There was no sound anywhere. Their waiting seemed endless.

Appu was getting impatient. "I don't think there's anyone here," he said. "Let's take a look around."

"Take out your torch, Appu," said Biju.

But Pratap's "shshish" stopped him from switching it on. They listened in silence. There were faint voices coming from far, from somewhere below.

The voices soon grew louder; a light fell on the ceiling. In the reflection of the light, they could see the room though not clearly.



There were two old settees at one end of the room. Also a table and a few chairs. They were all old-fashioned. Some of them were even broken. However, three steel almirahs to their right were shining and appeared rather new.

Pratap signalled to his friends and the three went behind the almirahs in a jiffy. They waited with bated breath.

The voices came nearer now. There were three persons. They seemed to be climbing some steps. Three heads appeared at one end of the room. Two of them they recognised—Anand 'Sahib' and Shankar. The third was a short, bald man.

Now the boys could hear them very clearly.

"No," said the bald man. "We shouldn't hurry. The whole thing might backfire."

"That's right," said Anand. "But if he cracks before we get at it, we'll all be in trouble."

"He won't crack, even if it means he has to die. You don't know him. Now, Shankar, put that packet in the almirah. I go to Bombay only day after tomorrow. I'll take it with me then. Let's see how this business

here works out."

Anand and Shankar said "Yes, sir" at the same moment.

Shankar was carrying a big packet. Opening one of the almirahs, he put the packet inside and locked the almirah.

"Okay, let's go now," said baldy. He went out through the door followed by his two companions. The boys could hear the door being locked from outside.

"Alas, we're trapped here!" said Biju pathetically.

Radhakrishnan

## WHERE DOES IT HURT?

(See facing page)

**Y**OU'VE got to hand it to David Taylor. As a zoo vet, he travels the world treating wild animals. At left he is examining a tiny 5-week-old raccoon called Squeaky, which is being bottle-reared at Chessington Zoo after being abandoned by its mother. At right, David tries to take the heart beat of Cleopatra. She is an 8-ft-long boa constrictor from S. America! Her cold 3-chambered heart beats only ten times a minute.

Summer was at its worst this year in many parts of Europe. The U.K. was no exception, and even the 21-year-old gelding, Sefton, netted a knotted handkerchief to keep the sun off his brow. Sefton belongs to the Royal Household Cavalry.

The little owl and the pussy cat—below right—are six-week-old "Twitters" and "Tiger" of a venerable 24 summers. They both belong to Mr. and Mrs. Cross of Thorpe Le Soken, Essex. Alex found six owlets in an abandoned nest. Two were still alive, and he took them home.

(Asia Features)

# A DOCTOR AND HIS PATIENTS



TWITTERS  
TIGER AND SEFTON

# ESSAY CONTEST



SPONSORED BY THE UNITED NATIONS  
IN COLLABORATION WITH CHILDREN'S BOOK TRUST



## Rules

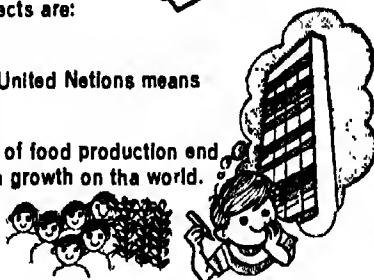
**1** This essay contest is open to all school children in India, who were born on or after January 1, 1968



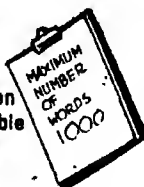
**2** The subjects are:

a) What the United Nations means to me

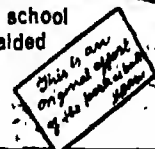
b) The effect of food production and population growth on the world.



**3** A participant can write an essay on any ONE of the two topics listed above. The length should not exceed 1,000 words. It must be written legibly by hand or typewritten in double space on one side of the paper. The essay must be in ENGLISH.



**4** Every entry should be accompanied by the following details: Full name of the participant (in bold letters), age and date of birth, sex, class and school, full address, and a certificate from the Headmaster or Principal of the school to say that the essay is the unaided effort of the participant.



**5** The closing date is September 30, 1983.



**6** Entries should be addressed to The Editor, CHILDREN'S WORLD, Nehru House, 4 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi 110002. The envelope should be marked "U.N. ESSAY CONTEST"



**1ST PRIZE**  
**2ND PRIZE**  
**3RD PRIZE**

An attractive album-like presentation folder

A set of United Nations stamps

A set of four annual souvenir folders

The winners will also receive a small presentation folder bearing the 24 October 1983 (United Nations Day) cancellation.

**7** All prizewinning entries will be the property of the United Nations. They will also be published in CHILDREN'S WORLD.



# Prince Valiant

IN THE DAYS OF KING ARTHUR

CREATED BY HAL FOSTER



Our Story: YOUNG ALP ARSLAN, SEIZED FOR POACHING, WAS IN FACT PRACTICING FOR KING ZOG'S TOURNAMENT. "IF ONLY I HAD A PARTNER," HE SAYS. "FOR THE KING PROMISES THAT HIS DAUGHTER WILL CHOOSE A HUSBAND FROM AMONG THE WINNERS. NO ONE HAS SET EYES ON HER, BUT SHE IS SAID TO BE A GREAT BEAUTY."



"I MIGHT BE TEMPTED..." VAL MUSES, THINKING OF THE CHAOS AT HOME. ALP ARSLAN ROLLS HIS EYES. "THIS IS NO SPORT FOR OLD MEN."



"TRY ME," PRINCE VALIANT CHALLENGES. ALP PUTS HIM TO THE TEST: ARCHERY, WRESTLING, SWORDPLAY AND CHESS. "I GUESS YOU WILL DO," HE CONCEDES GRUDGINGLY. AND HIS EYES BRIGHTEN. "THIS MAY BE A BLESSING. IF WE WIN, THE PRINCESS WILL HARDLY PICK YOU."



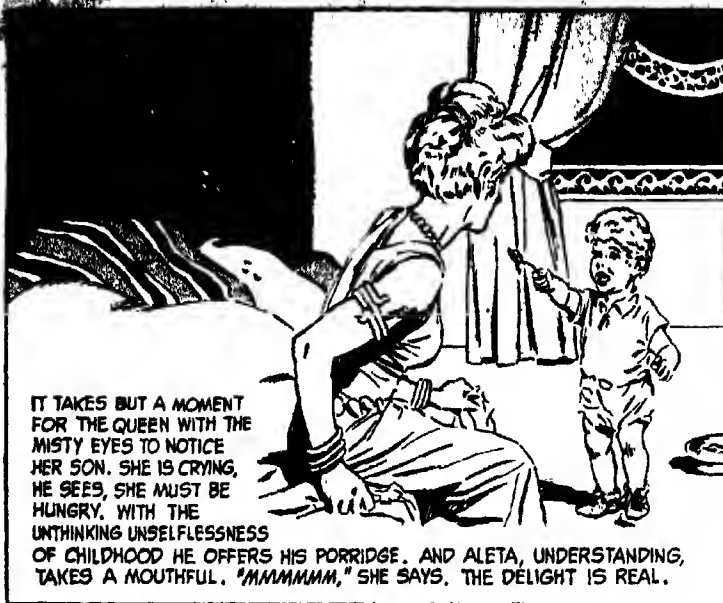
BUT FIRST VAL MUST WIN AN ARGUMENT WITH ALETA-- NO SPORT FOR BOYS, HE SMILES. "HOW CAN YOU EVEN THINK OF IT?" THE QUEEN DEMANDS. "TWO WEEKS," VAL REPLIES. "I NEED TO GET AWAY." HE APPLIES THE 'SINGING SWORD' TO WHETSTONE AND DROWNS OUT REBUTTAL.



TWO SHIPS DEPART THE NEXT DAY, ONE BEARING ARN TO CAMELOT, THE OTHER VAL AND ALP ARSLAN TO DALMATIA. FREE AT LAST.



ALETA IS IN A TERRIBLE STATE. HER MEN ARE GONE AND SHE HAS NOT BEEN ON SPEAKING TERMS WITH THE TWINS FOR DAYS. SHE LAVISHES AFFECTION ON NATHAN, YET STILL HER SON YEARNS FOR JUDITH. THAT MORNING THE QUEEN BREAKS INTO TEARS. NATHAN LOOKS UP. HE KNOWS WHAT CRYING MEANS. A CHUBBY ARM EXTENDS THE SPOON.



IT TAKES BUT A MOMENT FOR THE QUEEN WITH THE MISTY EYES TO NOTICE HER SON. SHE IS CRYING, HE SEES, SHE MUST BE HUNGRY, WITH THE UNTHINKING UNSELFLESSNESS OF CHILDHOOD HE OFFERS HIS PORRIDGE. AND ALETA, UNDERSTANDING, TAKES A MOUTHFUL. "MMMMMM," SHE SAYS. THE DELIGHT IS REAL.



NATHAN FEEDS HER MORE. WERE HE CAPABLE OF THOUGHTS INSTEAD OF INSTINCTS HIS MIND WOULD READ: SHE JUST WANTED SOME ATTENTION.



FOR HER OTHER SOURCES OF ATTENTION ARE GONE: ARN TO CAMELOT, VAL WITH ALP ARSLAN TO KING ZOG'S TOURNEY. PRINCE VALIANT SUCKS IN THE SPRAY OF THE INLAND SEA. HE LEARNS THAT ALP IS AN ORPHAN AND BY ORIGIN A TURK, RAISED IN A LOCAL HOME.



"ON THE IDES OF EVERY MONTH A MYSTERIOUS MAN CAME TO PAY MY EXPENSES," ALP EXPLAINS. THE CAPTAIN INTERRUPTS. "FOUND SOME STOWAWAYS," HE SAYS. "WE COULD SELL THEM IN DALMATIA FOR A PRETTY SUM." VAL LOOKS SOURLY AT THE TWINS. "GOOD IDEA," HE REPLIES.

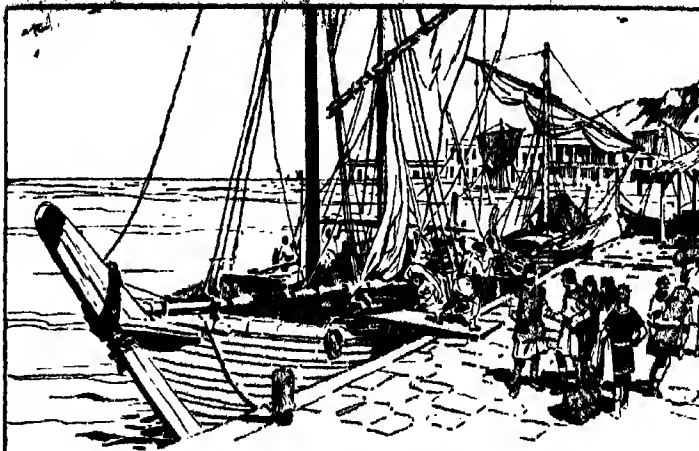


ONLY LATER DOES VAL RELEASE THEM FROM THE BRIG. "WE JUST HAD TO GET AWAY," KAREN SAYS. "BUT WE WILL BE A BIG HELP, WAIT AND SEE."



AND THEY ARE. BY DISTRACTING THE HELMSMAN THEY HELP DRIVE THE SHIP ONTO A SANDBAR. BY DISTRACTING ALP AT PRACTICE, HE THROWS A KNIFE ASTRAY AND THE FEBRUARY WINDS EXPLOIT THE HOLE, RIPPING THE MAINSAIL TO SHREDS. "MY WIFE ONCE WANTED DAUGHTERS," THE CAPTAIN SAYS. "WE HAVE NEVER REGRETTED BUYING A DOG INSTEAD."





A TATTERED SHIP WITH ITS WEARY CREW LIMPS INTO THE DALMATIAN PORT OF SALONAE. "TAKE MY ADVICE," THE CAPTAIN WARNS. "SELL THE GIRLS, AND DO NOT PAY THE BUYER TOO MUCH FOR TAKING THEM." KING ZOG'S REALM IS AGOG WITH MERRIMENT. THE TOURNAMENT BEGINS THE NEXT DAY.



FROM THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH CONTESTANTS HAVE COME, RISKING THE ENTRY FEE OF TEN DENARII. HOPE RUNS HIGH.



IN DALMATIA GAMBLING IS ILLEGAL AND THEREFORE COMMONPLACE. NO SOONER HAS PRINCE VALIANT ARRIVED WITH ALP IN TOW THAN THE BOOKMAKERS LOOK THEM OVER AND PRONOUNCE THE ODDS: FIVE TO ONE. "IT WOULD BE MORE FAVORABLE, YOUR GRACE," SAYS ONE...



"...BUT THERE IS ANOTHER TEAM, AN OLD MAN AND A YOUNG ONE, MASKED STRANGERS, AND THEY HAVE IMPRESSED THE BETTORS." INDEED, GREAT CROWDS GATHER TO WATCH THE UNKNOWN PAIR AT PRACTICE, AND VAL SHUDDERS TO OBSERVE THE OLD FELLOW'S AGILITY



FROM A BALCONY HIGH ABOVE SALONAE KING ZOG AND HIS DAUGHTER TAKE IN THE FESTIVITIES. "ARE YOU EXCITED, MY SWEET?" HE ASKS.



BACK IN ATTAPPA, ANKISHA HAD THE TATTERED SHIP EATEN HER FILL SHE CONFRONTS NATHAN WITH A NEW BOWL OF PORRIDGE. "THE GREAT WARSHIP SAILS INTO PORT," SHE SAYS ENTICINGLY, "THE CARS SLIP TO THE SIDES AND IN..." -- THE LIPS PART -- "...IT GOES." NATHAN FLAPS HIS ARMS AS SOME OF THE SHIP SLIPS OUT.





AS ALETA BEFRIENDS HER SON, ENVY OF JUDITH DIMS. ON THE QUESTION OF A NAME, THE QUEEN GRACEFULLY WITHDRAWS. "NATHAN WAS A GREAT PROPHET," SHE TELLS JUDITH. "EGIL WAS MERELY THE UNCLE OF A HUSBAND WHO HAS LEFT ME IN MY HOUR OF NEED." THEIR EYES MEET, AND THE WOMEN COLLAPSE IN LAUGHTER.



AMID ALL THE POMP KING ZOG OF DALMATIA CAN MUSTER, THE TOURNAMENT BEGINS. THE LISTS ARE QUICKLY THINNED...



...AS AMATEURS SUCCUMB TO VETERANS AND DEPART THE STADIUM, POORER, SORER, AND WISER. THE PRIZE IS KING ZOG'S DAUGHTER, THE RENOWNED GRENOL, MORE BEAUTIFUL (SAID THE GOSSIPS) THAN A SPRING DAY IN PARADISE. IN ARCHERY VAL AND ALP TAKE THE HONORS.



BUT THE HAND-TO-HAND CONTEST PROVES EMBARRASSING. THE MASKED TEAM OF OLD MAN AND YOUNG ARE WITHOUT PEER. ALP ARSLAN IS THROWN AND PINNED AT ONCE BY "GRANDFATHER" WHILE VAL MANAGES ONLY A DRAW WITH A LAD YOUNG ENOUGH TO BE HIS SON.



YET, ON HIS BACK ALP MAKES A DISCOVERY. "THE JUDGE," HE TELLS VAL LATER, "IT WAS HE WHO PAID MY STEPPARENTS EVERY MONTH."

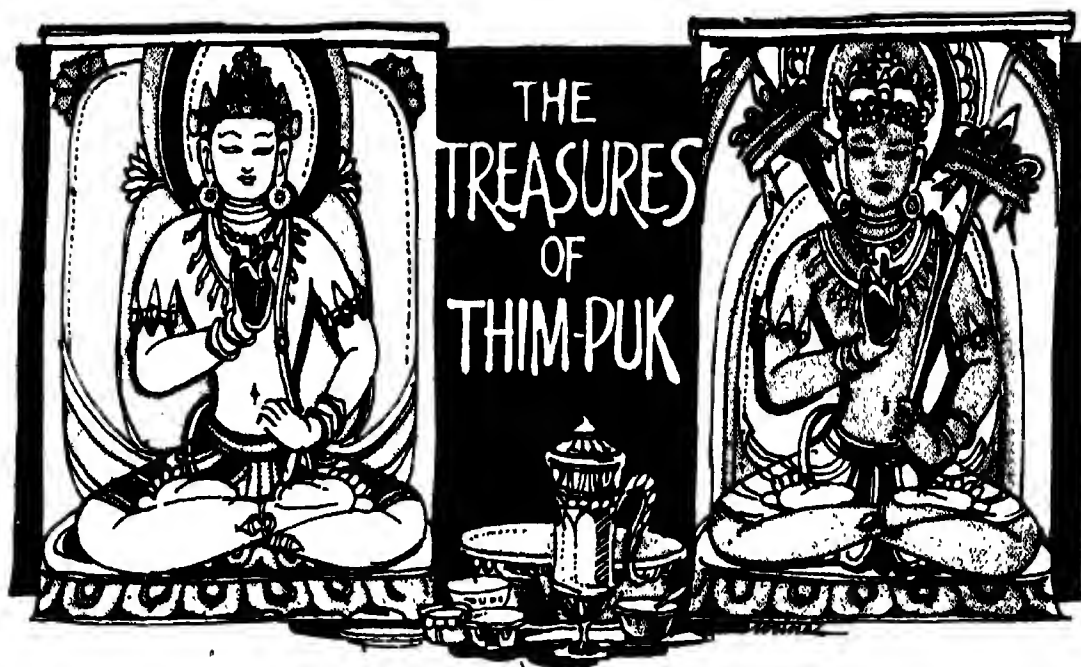
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VAL HAS FOUND LODGING FOR HIS PARTNER AND THE TWINS ON THE TOP FLOOR OF AN INN, HIGH ABOVE THE SLOPES OF SALONAE. "DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN WIN?" KAREN ASKS A BRUISED ALP ARSLAN. "YES," HE SAYS. "I WILL MARRY A PRINCESS." YES, KAREN THINKS TO HERSELF AS SHE SOOTHES THE BOY'S WOUNDS, SOMEDAY YOU JUST MIGHT.

(TO BE CONTINUED) 2-37

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IT was because of its monastery that Thim-Puk was a special village in the Himalayas.

Silken paintings called 'tankhas', worth thousands of rupees, and cups and bowls of gold and silver had been gifted to this monastery a long time ago by the kings of Ladakh, as offering to Lord Buddha.

When the winter snows melted, pilgrims would go to pray at the monastery.

Young Sonam used to look forward to the busy pilgrim season. His uncle, Norbu, owned the village inn. And often, when Sonam was not up in the higher mountains grazing his father's yaks, he would help his uncle at the inn.

One evening, in early summer, when the winter snow had melted everywhere, save in the shady corners where it was still too cold, two strangers came to Norbu's inn.

Sonam helped them unload their ponies. Then he carried their bags inside, and bade them sit near the blazing fire of yak dung and sweet-smell-

ing juniper twigs.

He brought them salty butter-tea, with an extra blob of butter added.

Everybody liked Sonam, and it was not long before the strangers also began to like him.

"Tell us more about the monastery!" they begged Sonam.

Their interest in the monastery was truly keen, and Sonam felt very pleased to tell them all he knew.

"Tomorrow, I'll take you to see it," he promised the two men. So, very early next morning, Sonam led them up the steep slope to the monastery.

He noticed that they spent a longer time looking at the silken tankhas, and the gold and silverware than they did in praying to the Buddha.

But, he waited patiently until they had finished looking before he took them back to the inn.

For the rest of the day, the two strangers just sat around by the indoor, drinking chhang and talking to each other in low voices.

At supper-time, Sonam served them hot Thuk-pa, the food that mountain

people love.

"Marvellous!" they cried. "We've never before eaten such noodles and meat in any inn!"

Then, they spread out their sheepskins in front of the fire. But, before they went to sleep, they called to Sonam. "Tomorrow, we're off to Leh," the older of the two men told him. "Here's some money. Spend it as you wish."

He pressed a brand new coin into Sonam's palm and patted him on the back.

Next morning, when Sonam and his uncle awoke, they found that the two strangers had gone. And it was not long before there was an uproar in the village of Thim-puk.

"THE TREASURES ARE GONE! THE TREASURES ARE GONE!" people cried out.

Sonam hurried to the village green where the Headman and the Head Lama were talking to the people.

Sonam could not believe his ears.

"ALL THE GOLD, ALL THE SILVER, AND ALL THE PRECIOUS TANKHAS ARE GONE!"

But, it was only yesterday that he had seen them!

Suddenly, with a sick thud in his heart, Sonam knew who the thieves might be.

He went up to the Headman, and told him all about the two strangers whom he had taken to see the monastery, and how they had stared at the treasures all the time instead of praying.

"They told me they were going to Leh," he finished the story.

As soon as they heard Sonam's tale, the angry villagers set off for Leh, in chase of the thieves.

But Sonam was worried. He thought

hard. He was sure the thieves would not go to Leh.

"If they had planned to go to Leh, would they be so stupid as to tell me?" Sonam asked his uncle, Norbu.

"No," was Norbu's reply. "They would head for some other side, to a place where nobody would know that the treasures belonged to a monastery."

"Yes, I think they'll go to Spiti, and then to Kinnaur, and from there to Simla, where travellers will buy the treasures for a lot of money!" Sonam agreed.

Sonam decided he must track down the thieves somehow.

So, all alone, and without telling anyone, he set out to look for the thieves.

It was not long before he spotted the two strangers on the narrow track which led to Spiti. Behind them were their ponies loaded high with the stolen treasures.

Sonam ran to catch up with them. His lungs felt as though they would burst, but he did not dare to stop to rest, lest he lost their trail.

They did not hear him come up behind them because of the noise of the river nearby. Even so, he took care to stay hidden behind the turns on the mountain road, just in case they looked back.

At dusk, they came to the banks of a mighty river, which was swollen because of the melting snow from the higher reaches.

Sonam's heart leapt with joy.

The thieves would not be able to cross the river that night!

For them, of course, there was the rope-bridge across the river, made of thick, very strong rope. But, their ponies could not go over the rope-bridge. They would have to swim

across. And swimming would be safe only in the morning, before the sun came out to melt the snow on the mountains, and give the river all its extra water.

Sonam watched from behind a large boulder, as the thieves unpacked their belongings for the night.

After their supper of butter-tea and tsampa, the two men rolled out their sheep-skins and, soon, they were fast asleep.

As soon as he heard their snores, Sonam crept out of his hiding place. He went up to the ponies, and untied them. By morning, the ponies would be far up on the top of the mountain, and it would take the thieves many hours to find and catch them again.

Then Sonam went back to where the

thieves slept.

The river made such a loud noise that they could not hear him walking about. He took a knife from their bags and began to cut the strong ropes of the rope-bridge tied to wooden frames on the two river-banks.

The ropes were so thick that his arms began to ache. His fingers felt numb with cold, but he would not give up, and went on cutting at the ropes.

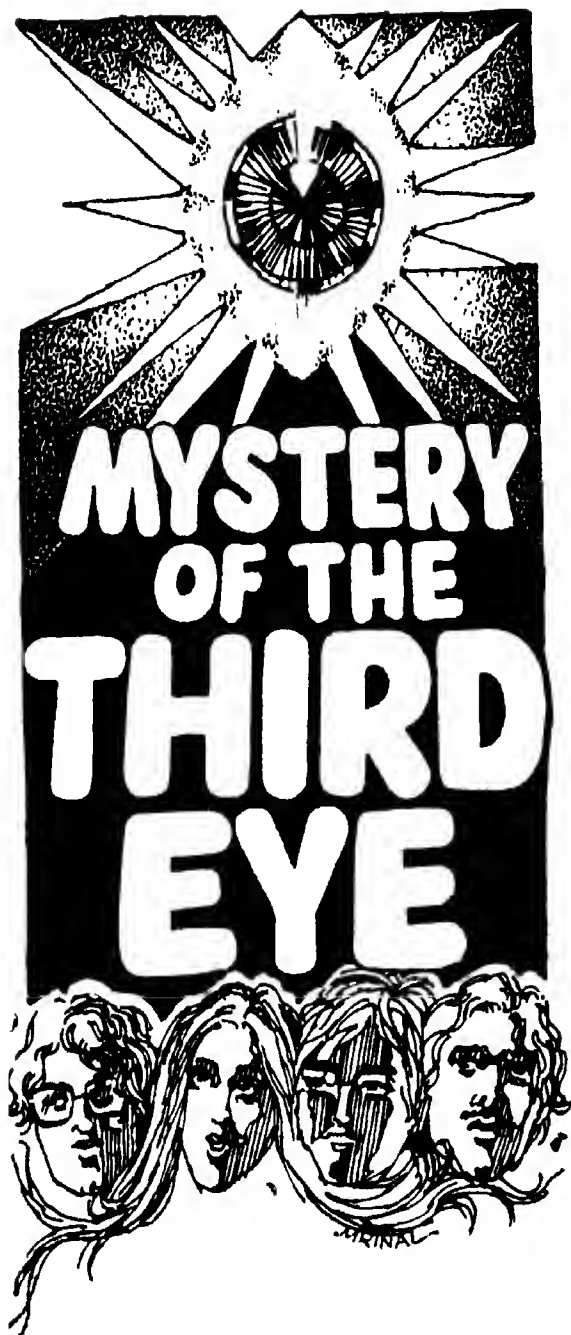
Once the knife slipped from his fingers, and it took him a long time to find it again in the pitch darkness.

At last, he felt the ropes break.

Sonam grabbed the loose ends of the cut ropes, and flung them far out into

*(Continued on page 38)*





**"LOOK** out, Minoo!" yelled Jacob, as a small foreign-make car skidded on the S-bend at one of the steepest sections of the Western Ghat, bumping into Minoo's motorbike. The cream-coloured car sped away without stopping.

It was too late! Minoo and his pillion-rider, Ravi, were sent flying into the air, and the bike lay helplessly spinning

on its side. Minoo landed safely on the road, but Ravi was catapulted towards the cliff edge. He landed, rolled towards the edge and, unable to stop himself, over he went.

"RAVI!" screamed Jacob. Ravi's cousin, Sonia, was dumbstruck, holding a hand over her mouth, as she sat frozen behind Jacob on his bike. Jacob leapt off, shouting to Sonia to do so. Dropping his bike into a side, he raced towards the cliff edge. Sonia followed. Minoo was just stumbling to his feet, dazed, trying to remove his helmet.

"Thank goodness, there he is!"

"He's hanging onto that bush! Oh Jacob, what'll we do?" Sonia cried.

Quickly, silently, Jacob produced a rope from the rucksack on his back, and handed one end to Minoo, who had by then sufficiently recovered and joined them to peer anxiously at Ravi. He was hanging on to a bush about eight feet below. If he let go, he would roll down the steep incline to the valley far below!

"Hang on, Ravi! We'll have you up soon! Just hold on, for goodness sake!"

"Hurry ... I can't, much longer!" Ravi's voice drifted weakly up to them. "I'm feeling dizzy..."

"Tie the rope to that tree across the road!" Jacob ordered Minoo and Sonia. "Quickly! See that it is firmly secured!"

Sonia stood in the middle of the road to stop any other car that might pass that way. The rope was stretched tautly across the tarmac. Jacob tied a loop at the other end and lowered it down to Ravi.

"Put your feet on the loop, Ravi, and hang on to the rope with your hands ... that's right ... Watch out!" Jacob called out, as Ravi's foot disturbed earth and stones that went tumbling



down. "And for god's sake, don't look down, whatever you do! Got it? Right! Now hang on. Minoo and I will pull you up! Easy now!"

Just then a car came labouring up the steep incline, engine steaming.

"Stop! Stop!" Sonia cried, rushing towards the vehicle, hands held up.

"Hey! What do you think you're doing? Now my car won't start again!" a man's voice came, as he emerged from the stalled, boiling car. "What's going on?"

"Help!" cried Sonia. "Help us pull my cousin up! He has fallen over the cliff!"

One look, and the man raced over to where the puffing and straining Jacob and Minoo were trying their best to haul up the other boy.

"Here! Let me get in front," the man ordered, "I'm stronger than you two!"

In a few minutes a dazed Ravi was sitting safely on the side of the road. "I thought I'd had it!" he mumbled shakily.

"Have a drink of water!" the helpful man said. "Wait, I've got some in my car!" And he strode over to return with a flask. "I've some tea left over. It'll do you better. Come on," he urged Ravi as he held the lid filled with steaming sweet liquid to the boy's lips.

Soon the colour returned to Ravi's

face, and he got up to take a look at the bike.

"How did it happen?" the man enquired, rubbing his beard. "It was a foreign car, I think, and there was a hippie at the wheel. I got an impression of long hair and a sleeveless jacket!" Jacob explained. "I'll know the car if I see it again!"

Minoo's bike seemed to be in working order, so they thanked the man and started up. They were on their way down from Khandala. They'd been out

on a joy ride, and were returning to Minoo's uncle's farm at Karjat, about fifteen miles from the foot of the Western Ghat, known for steepness and sharp S-bends.

"Can you ride all right, Minoo?" Sonia asked. "Or shall I take over? I've my own moped in Chandigarh, and have ridden a bike a few times."

"Nothing doing!" cried an indignant Minoo. "I'm not letting any girl ride my bike! What a hope!"

"Okay! Okay! It was only a suggestion!"

They continued on their way down, between the rolling green hills, wooded in parts, dropping sheerly to the valley below in places. It was early morning, about 8 o'clock, and the mist eerily clothed the hillside, playing hide and seek with the trees. The cool air became warmer, as they headed towards the bottom of the mountain.

"Oh! My ears feel so funny!" gasped Sonia.



"That's because we've come down from a height," explained Jacob. "Suck a sweet if you have one, and you'll feel much better!"

Sonia produced one from her pocket. The wind whipped strands of her long, loose black hair across her cheeks and neck.

She glanced at her overweight cousin, who was her own age, seated at the back of the other bike. His red-checked shirt and black pants made him look more cheerful than he felt at the moment — his round face looked pale and peaky. He had wrapped his black jacket around his neck.

Khopoli! They had reached the bottom! Jacob blinked through his glasses — his thin face tensed as his glance fell upon a car — a foreign car! It was parked outside a restaurant.

He slammed on his breaks.

"What's it?" called out Minoo.

"The VW!"

"The VW?"

"The Volkswagon, stupid!" Jacob snapped. "Come on — we've got a score to settle!"

"No, Jacob, please!" groaned Ravi. "Let it be! I'm feeling too shaken to get into a fight! Just let's get back to the farm!"



"But they shouldn't be allowed to get away with it...."

"Please let it be!" pleaded Sonia, who was worried about her cousin.

"But we may not get an opportunity again!" Minoo put in.

"Oh all right!" gave in Jacob reluctantly, with a glance at Ravi's face. "I guess we'd better get him back!"

A couple of hours later, Ravi was asleep inside the farm house, whilst Minoo and Jacob were bent over their motorbikes. Sonia was watching and trying to be helpful. Minoo, an expert mechanic, crouched on the ground in his usual jeans and T-shirt.

"I can't understand why you call yourselves 'The Tigers!'" Sonia wondered. "Of course, I'm very pleased to be included while I'm here," she hastily added, patting the tiger emblem on her jacket. She shook her long hair out and swung it up into a pony tail.

"Well, we've got 'tigers in our tanks', that is! You've seen the way these bikes move," he said, proudly patting the two Bullets, "they are just ...."

He was cut off by the sound of a car driving into the farmyard.

Jacob gripped Minoo's arm. "It's them!"

"Who?"

"The VW!"

The car drew up. The doors opened. Two hippies got out.

"Whose farm is this?" asked one of them, a Nepali with a Genghis Khan moustache, straight long hair, his upper torso bare except for a sleeveless open jacket.

"What do you want here?" demanded Jacob.

Minoo stood up, wiping his hands on his jeans.

The other hippie had long, wavy golden hair, a beard, and he was silent. He had an air about him. Hanging around his neck on a thick chain was an Ankh, the Egyptian symbol of eternity. It looked like a metal loop-handled screw driver with a smaller cross bar. It flashed as the sun caught it.

Sonia watched carefully. Here was trouble. Her senses were alert.

"Answer me, and don't get smart!" spat the Nepali. He caught Jacob by his shirt collar. The Ankh (which is what Sonia immediately called him in her mind) leaned casually against the car, arms folded.

"Let him go!" Minoo advanced threateningly, fists clenched.

"You keep out of this!" the Nepali snarled. "I asked ..." He didn't end. He couldn't! For Sonia, quick as lightning, had brought her hand down on the side of his neck in a Nelson half-chop and, side-stepping at the same time, she flung him to the ground with a twist!

"WOW!" exclaimed Jacob.

"I'll teach you. .!" the Nepali sprang up.

"Thapa! Leave it!" barked the Ankh who had been watching indifferently. "Into the car!" he snapped out an order, and before anyone could move, the doors slammed, the vehicle reversed roughly, and roared away.

"What was it all about?" wondered Minoo.

"Where did you learn to do that?" Jacob gazed admiringly at Sonia.

"Chandigarh! From a Karate master!"

"I'm quite good at it myself!" said Jacob.

"Let's see who's better!" Sonia



challenged.

"HAH!" went Jacob, jumping into an attacking position.

"EEYAH!" went Sonia. Suddenly, Jacob was lying on the ground, looking sheepish. What had hit him? Sonia stood over him, grinning.

Jacob got up and wryly scratched his close-cropped, crew cut head. "You must show me a few things!"

"Certainly!" said Sonia airily, and left them.

That night, the "Tigers" sat listening to 'Saturday Date', a music programme over the radio. They were to return to Bombay the next morning.

"Hey!" The Abbas! My favourite!" exclaimed Sonia. "Turn it on louder."

"Hey! Shut that off, you kids," called out Minoo's uncle. "I'm trying to get some sleep. It's going to be eleven o'clock!"

"Okay," answered Minoo. He was a good-natured boy. "Anyway, it's nearly over now . . . Oh listen! The news is coming on."

They heard the news reader: "There was a robbery in Bombay where priceless idols, some studded with gems, are on show. A gem from a Tibetan idol has been stolen. An emerald was found missing from the middle of its head early this morning. There were, however, no signs of the museum being broken into. The emerald is well known as 'The Third Eye', and is worth . . ."

"Hey! What on earth is happening . . . ?"

"Quiet, Ravi!" cut in Sonia. "Let's listen." But the news reader had gone on to another topic.

"Back to Bombay tomorrow! I bet my elder brother, Morris, will be on the case. He's an Inspector in the Bombay C.I.D.!" exclaimed Jacob. "Tigers?"

he cocked an eyebrow at the others enquiringly.

"YES!" they cried in unison, knowing exactly what he meant.

"Bombay, here we come!"

Kamala Ramchandani

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*(Continued from page 33)*

the raging river. He knew that within minutes, they would be at the other bank, bobbing freely on the river and out of reach of the thieves, who would not now be able to mend the bridge again.

Not waiting for another moment, Sonam sped back along the track he had come, to Thim-puk.

His feet were torn and bleeding, but he did not care. Even the fear of ghosts did not stop him.

As soon as Sonam stepped into Thim-puk, the village dogs set up a loud barking. Rough hands caught him in the dark by the scruff of his neck, thinking him to be another thief!

"Let go! Let go! It is I! Sonam!" he cried, struggling with the man who held him.

Sonam was tired, and faint with hunger, but he refused to rest or eat, until he had told his story to the crowd around him, and had seen off a party of men go after the thieves.

The treasures were safe!

"Even if the thieves find their ponies in time," Sonam told his uncle, "they'll never dare cross the river without the rope-bridge!"

Norbu nodded.

For, all mountain people know how a mountain river can just dash a man on the rocks and kill him in a second if he tries to swim across a snow-swollen river.

Simren Kaur

# A Poor Man's Dream

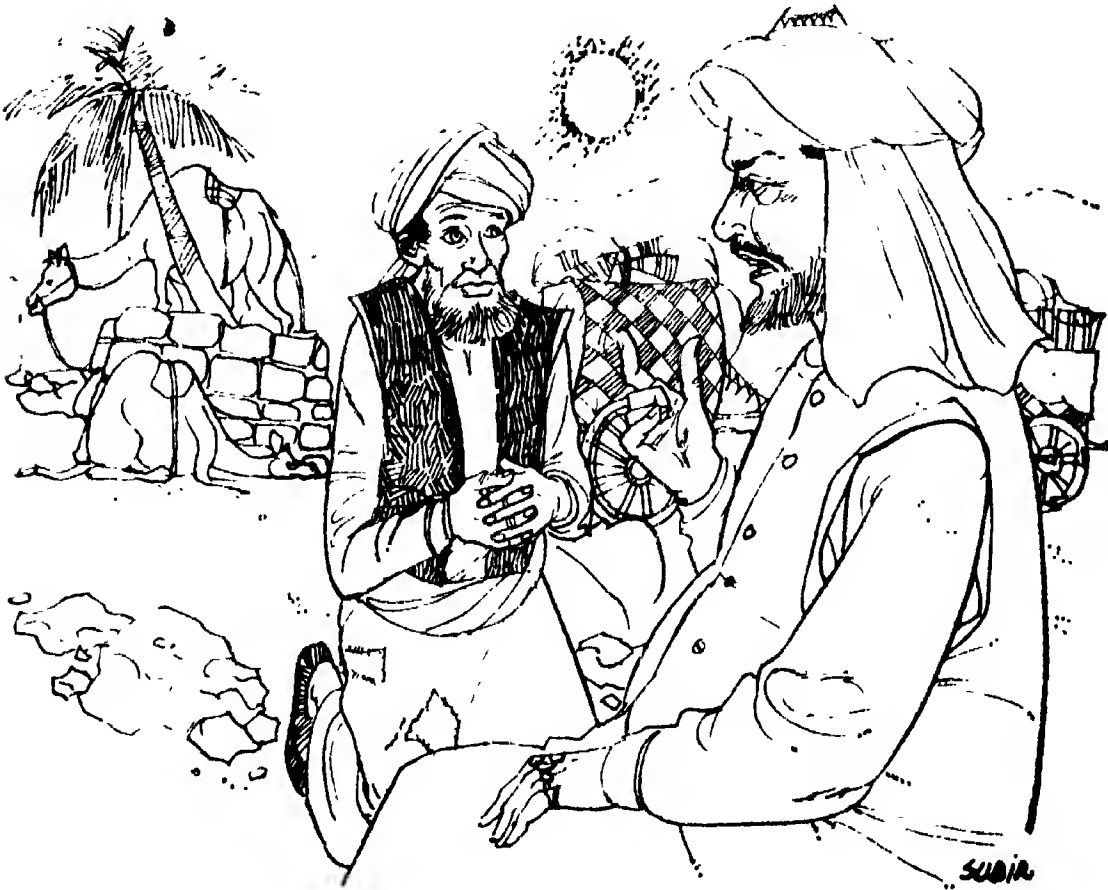
T HERE lived in Baghdad a poor man who thought he was the most unfortunate man on earth. To begin with, he could find no work. He had become so poor that he could not even afford to rent a hovel. He had to move his family into an old crumbling ruin that lay outside the city wall.

On top of this, he had a wife who never spoke a kind word to him. True, her tongue had been made sharper by hunger. But it did seem that she was always complaining, always telling him that he was lazy and worthless and would never rise in life. "The trouble with you", she would say in her shrill

voice, "is that you have no more ambition than that dried up fountain falling to pieces in our courtyard. You have no wish to be anything but a poor man! You enjoy it! You don't care how much your wife and children suffer."

But the worst misfortune was a dream that came to the poor man whenever he lay down to sleep. In his dream, he would find himself walking under an empty sky. On his back was a heavy pack, and a voice kept roaring into his ears: "On to Cairo! On to Cairo! Your fortune is in Cairo!"

The walking was so tiring, the voice so loud and terrible, that he would



wake up, panting and tired and full of fear.

He told his wife about the dream and said, "Perhaps, I really should go to Cairo!"

"Cairo!" she mocked. "Do you know how far it is and you would have to walk all the way? Besides," — and she looked at him through narrowed eyes — "how do I know you will really go to Cairo? And if you do go, how do I know whether you will ever get back? You are just lazy and mean enough to run away and leave me to starve with our little ones! Cairo, indeed!" then she stomped away angrily.

So, the man said nothing more about Cairo. But he went on dreaming the same dream. Now, there was a well of clean water not far from the ruins where they lived. Often he would sit at the well, waiting for passing travellers to come along. When they stopped to draw water, he would ask them if they had any work for him. He would fill water for them and wash their clothes and make a fire for them to cook. In this way, he was able to earn a few coins.

One day, as he was sitting in his usual place, a great caravan stopped at the well. The men gave water to their camels and donkeys, drew water for themselves, and chatted about the journey ahead of them. It turned out that they were going to Cairo.

Cairo! The man got up and went closer to the travellers. He asked if they had any work for him. He could make himself useful if they would let him join them on their journey. "Come along and welcome!" their old leader said. "You can ride on one of the pack camels. There'll always be some work for you."

The man hastened to climb upon one of the kneeling animals before it stood on its feet. Bending over so that his wife would not see him as the caravan rode by, he left the city of Baghdad. That night, he slept with the men and the animals under the stars. It was the first night in many, many weeks that he did not dream his usual dream. He went on with the caravan, until at last he saw the towers of Cairo shining in the sunset.

The caravan broke up as soon as it reached the city, and so the man was alone. He had no money for food and no place to sleep. He wandered through the strange streets until he was too weary to walk any farther. Then he sank down in a doorway, let his eyes close, and fell asleep.

He was awakened at dawn by a rough hand shaking his shoulder. A voice said, "We've enough beggars in Cairo. We don't need you. Now come along, and hurry!"

He was pushed and pulled through the streets and thrown on a pile of straw in a prison. There he lay, frightened and hungry, his limbs trembling and his teeth chattering. After many hours, he was dragged before a judge. The judge looked down upon him sternly. "Tell me, from what city do you come?"

"Baghdad, Protector of the poor!"

"Indeed, and how did you get here?" asked the judge.

"With a caravan," said the poor man.

"And why did you make this journey?"

"This may seem strange and foolish to you, O Learned one, but I came to Cairo because of a dream. I dreamt every night that I would make my for-

tune here and, alas, I am thrown into a prison like a thief!"

He lowered his head in shame, almost ready to burst into tears.

The judge was a kind-hearted man. "Now, now," he said, "things are not as bad as they seem. You've made yourself no poorer by coming to Cairo than you were in Baghdad. Here is half a dinar. Buy something to eat and then be off and on your way home."

The man took the coin and thanked the judge. "But how am I to get back home?" he asked.

"Be thankful that I am allowing you to go free," the judge said severely. "Here in Cairo, we usually put beggars

and vagabonds in jail and forget about them. I have shown mercy to you because you have answered all my questions honestly."

The judge paused and looked at the man. "Shall I tell you something really amusing? I, too, have a dream every night, but I am not so foolish as to believe in it."

"May I ask you what that dream is?" the poor man asked—not because he was at all curious, but it seemed to be the polite thing to say.

"In my dream, I am alone outside the city of Baghdad, near a broken, unused fountain standing in the courtyard of some miserable ruins," the judge



narrated.

The man's heart began to beat faster when he heard these words.

"As I stand there by the fountain," the judge went on, "I hear a voice. 'Dig!' it says. 'Dig behind that loose stone. A treasure is hidden there. He who digs for it will find it.' Now, if I were as foolish as you, I would leave my home and go off with a spade on my shoulder, looking stupidly for old, dried up fountains." The judge threw back his head, laughing so heartily that all his teeth showed.

The man laughed, too. He tried to control his laughter and hide the happiness and joy he felt in his heart.

"Farewell! And may the road back to Baghdad be a pleasant one," the judge said.

"Thank you," the man said. "You are very kind. May Allah bless you!" and he hurried away. His trip back to Baghdad seemed much shorter than his trip to Cairo. It was night when he arrived at the ruins where he had made his home. A white moon shed its light on the courtyard and on the old dried up fountain.

The man wasted no time in looking for the loose stone. With his bare hands, he began clawing away at the earth where the stone had rested. It broke into clods, as dry as salt. He dug a little more—and then he found a leather saddlebag, heavy with treasure! He tore the bag open, and rubies and diamonds and pearls and emeralds shimmered in the moonlight. The man did not know whether to laugh or cry at the plight of the judge in Cairo. But he held himself back, not wanting to wake up his wife.

He put the bag under his rug on

which he slept and lay down. In the morning, he was awakened by the shrill voice of his wife. He looked up at her as she stood over him.

"Well! Well!" she yelled. "So you've turned up again! And where have you been, if I may ask?"

"To Cairo," he said meekly.

"And I suppose you found your fortune as the dream foretold," the woman sneered.

"Yes, I did!" said the man and took out the saddlebag from under his rug. His wife stared into the bag and was so astonished that she could not say another word all day! And from that time, the poor man knew nothing but good fortune. He was poor no longer and moved his family to a fine house. At night, his sleep was no more troubled by dreams. And best of all, his wife no longer scolded him, but always spoke to him politely and with the greatest respect.

Rajlakshmi

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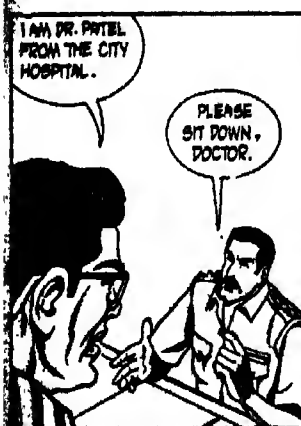
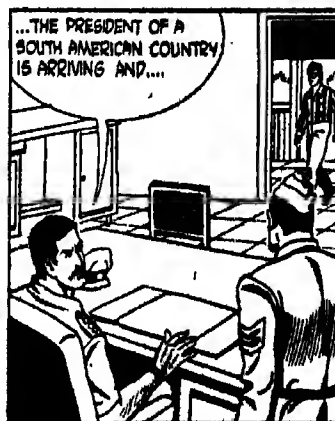
## SOLUTION TO AUGUST PICTUREWORD

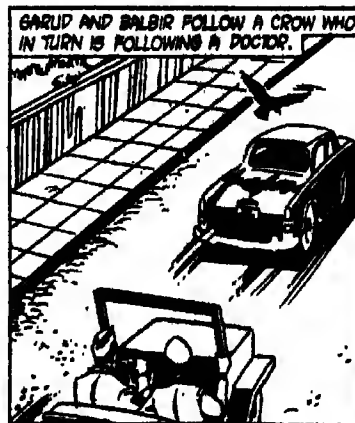
### Across:

1 Lapel, 5 Goal, 6 Falls, 8 Baggage,  
11 Shade, 12 Pool, 13 Posts.

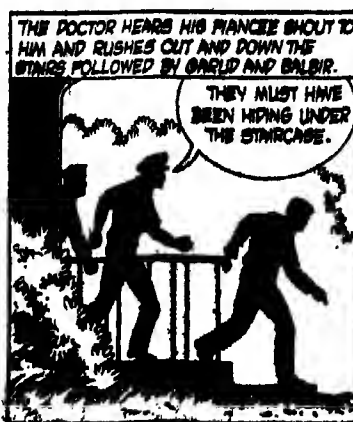
### Down:

1 Loft. 2 Pillarbox. 3 Hourglass,  
4 Clip, 7 Signs, 9 Cape, 10 Lens.

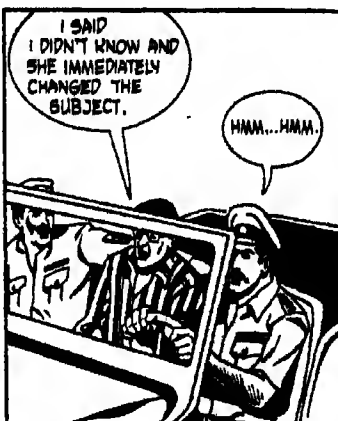
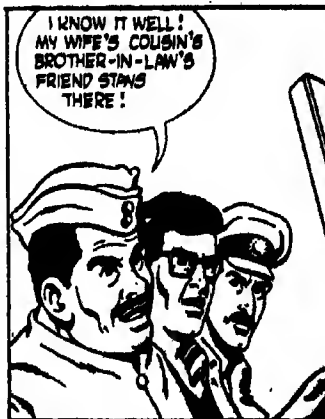
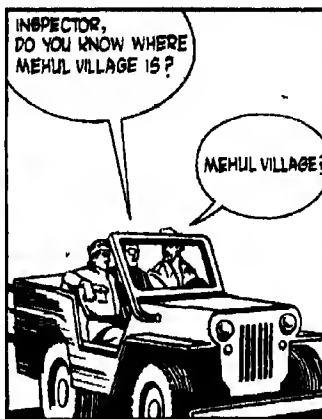
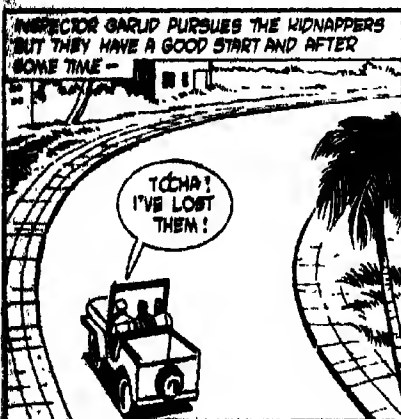














**I bought  
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I had to buy one myself.

I started saving.

And my dad said if I wanted to 'grow' my money, I should keep it with UCOBANK.

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# THE PURSUIT



KURPATI gazed at his father, who sat opposite him in the small kitchen of their home in Ulana.

His mother bent over the fire, making rotis, which his two sisters served with steaming hot vegetable curry.

No one spoke. They finished their meal in silence. Finally, his father washed his hands and sighed with deep satisfaction.

"Well," he said, and gazed at Kurpati from under his bushy brows "tomorrow we've to get to the rice fields. There's a lot of work awaiting us. The water channels have to be cleaned, and the boundary wall needs repair. You'll have to look after the buffalo's

feed, son. I think old Savitri is with a young one."

Kurpati nodded and his mother raised her head sharply. "Who's there?" she called out.

Kurpati looked at her and then back over his shoulders towards the door into the semi-dark room that served as a sitting room.

"Who's there?" asked his mother once again, her voice shrill with alarm.

The house lay quiet. "It's nothing, Ma," Kurpati was about to say when he himself heard a low whisper.

Who would have wanted to whisper in his father's house? Everyone in the village, all their neighbours and friends,

had free access to their house. "I'll go and see who it is," said Kurpati quietly. "Maybe it's just a prowling dog or a cat."

"Stop, don't move. Or we'll SHOOT!"

The harsh voice cut the stillness of the room like a shot.

Kurpati froze. He then turned his head slowly to the right and saw himself confronted by four tall men who seemed to have come from nowhere. They stood there in front of him with raised rifles, their legs apart in a display of brutal strength. They were dressed in rough clothes and their wild hair and beards tangled deep into their crude faces.

"Get inside that kitchen, boy," one of them hissed and his eyes narrowed into a fierce slit. "Get inside there and don't move!"

For a second, Kurpati stood still. His racing mind saw all that could happen; picture after picture formed clearly before his eyes:

The dacoits would break open their only cupboard, raid the whole house, rob them of everything they possessed. They would also kidnap their mother and carry away his young innocent sisters. They would kill the men, in fact the whole family. Then setting the house aflame, they would disappear into the jungle.

No, this should not happen. He would not allow it—never!

With a short deep-throated cry, he raised his fist and flung himself on the man nearest to him. He pushed his left fist into the dacoit's stomach and rammed the right into his chin.

The dacoit groaned and dropped his rifle. He held his stomach and winced in pain.

♦ This was exactly what Kurpati had been waiting for. He bent down for

the rifle, to fire at all the men, to kill them if he had to.

But before he could touch the gun, he felt a sharp pain wrack his body, as the fist of one of the other dacoits crashed down on his neck. The pain was so acute that it blurred his vision and robbed him of his breath.

"Get out of the way!" he heard the man hiss.

But Kurpati did not give up so easily. He wriggled out of his vice-like grip, rolled over on his back, pulled his knees right under his chest, and thrust them into the stomach of the broad-shouldered man above him.

The man spun round with a short cry, and Kurpati sprang to his feet ready to jump at the dacoit. But the heavy blow of a rifle against his chest threw him to the wall. For a moment, he was unable to breathe and felt his legs buckle under, but he knew there was too much to lose. Mustering all his strength, he leapt at the nearest man. He threw him to the ground and drove his fist hard into the man's jaw. He was vaguely conscious of his father jumping at the third dacoit in a desperate attempt to tug the gun off his shoulder.

"Get out of here!" his father shouted. "Go away!"

His sisters shrieked in terror—their mother shielding them with her eyes blazing with fury.

"Get out!" cried his father once more, but the rest of his words faded away, as a rifle struck his head.

Seeing his tall, strong father sink to the ground with a groan filled Kurpati with a searing rage and hatred. He knew he couldn't fight the intruders single-handed; he stood no chance against them with his bare fists; he had to seek help from the villagers. Like a

tiger, he lunged at the man's chest, threw him to the ground, and reached the door in three big leaps. He did not look back, not even when he heard a shot tear the air, followed by his mother's shriek. He heard his sister's terror-stricken voices call out to his mother. Oh god! Something had happened to her! His heart urged him to return, but he didn't.

He pushed open the door and was out in a flash, dashing down the path towards their neighbour's house.

"Thieves! Thieves! Help everybody! Help!" he shouted till he felt his lungs

bursting. He vaulted over bushes and boundary walls, sprinted over pots and jugs, and hammered at their neighbour's door. "Help! Mukesh and Shyam, help! Dacoits are raiding our house!"

Women shrieked, as men jumped to their feet. Someone shouted, "Get hold of something, Shyam, and call the others!"

They grabbed sticks and rifles and rushed out of the house.

"Be careful! Be careful! Oh god!" cried the women fearfully after them.

The men took no notice. They looked at Kurpati standing there bleeding



and badly bruised.

"Take this, boy," an older man said and threw him a bamboo stick. "You will need it."

Kurpati grabbed the stick. With tightly drawn lips, he weighed it in his hand and whispered, "Now we'll show them. Now they've to pay for everything!"

And shutting his mind to the pain that throbbed through his bruised body, he turned and set off, flying over the water jugs and vessels back to his house.

Once there, he saw the dacoits leaving. Looking neither right nor left, they hit the road and surged ahead. The last one was carrying a box under his arm, his mother's jewellery box! It contained all their wealth, all their savings!

Kurpati dived after them. He chased them with the bamboo stick in his hand, shouting, "Drop the box! Drop it here and now!"

The dacoits paid no heed to his shouts. They sprinted over the drain and zoomed down the road with Kurpati racing after them. Behind him, with their weapons raised, came the villagers. But none ran as fast as him. No one would reach the fleeing gangsters. He alone had the best, the only chance! Breathing hard, straining every muscle to gain ground, he worked himself closer to the dacoits ahead, inch by inch.

Suddenly, one of the men turned round and glared at him with hard, angry eyes. Breaking his speed slightly, he brought his rifle to his shoulder and fired wildly at the boy once, twice, three times. The shots barked through the air, but went wide.

Kurpati did not seem to hear the shots. He did not seem to hear any-

thing, not even his own angry voice, as he bellowed, "I'll get you! I'll get all of you!"

His eyes seemed to bore into the back of the dacoit at the rear, the one that carried the box.

He struggled closer, his chest paining with the intense effort to lunge at him. Now he was just a couple of yards away from the dacoit.

Kurpati raised his bamboo stick over his head and brought it down on the man's shoulder with all his might.

The dacoit roared in pain. He dropped the box and spun round. Kurpati looked into his fiery eyes. What he saw in them sent shivers down his spine, but he raised his stick once again and aimed at the man's head.

The dacoit ducked, dived, and before Kurpati could make another attempt to pin him down, he turned and whizzed through the trees towards the jungle.

But Kurpati was at his heel. He did not leave him. He chased him through trees, shrubs, and bushes, shouting, "You cannot get away! You can't!"

The man looked back over his shoulder at the shouting boy and at the horde of villagers closing in behind him.

His face turned grey. "Eh! Man Singh!" he roared. "Shoot at them, shoot!"

But the man in front of him did not seem to hear or pay any attention. And then the dacoit suddenly tripped over the stub of a tree and crashed onto the ground.

Kurpati was on top of him in a flash. He pinned him down with his knees and pushed his face deep into the grass.

"You thief!" he cried. "Now you'll have to pay for everything."

The injured dacoit jerked the boy

off his shoulder and tore himself free. He rolled over and reached for Kurpati's throat gripping it tightly, pressing it so hard that blood shot into the boy's eyes. He wriggled helplessly under the iron grip of the man. He lashed out with his feet and tried desperately to pull the choking hands off his throat.

Suddenly he felt the whole world spin round him, the wild face of the dacoit, the grass, the trees, the sun, and the sky.

Everything whistled round him and slowly sucked him under. Kurpati closed his eyes.

Seconds later, sticks rained heavy blows on the dacoit's head. The man groaned and sank motionless to the ground, burying the body of the boy under his weight.

Kurpati could feel the grip around his neck loosen, as the dacoit was overpowered and tied.

Then he struggled up and wiped his

face with trembling hands.

"Well done, my boy," smiled the village headman and patted his back. Turning to his men he ordered, "Take the dacoit back to the village. The rest, follow me!"

The villagers dashed off with raised sticks and sickles. They chased the fleeing culprits right into the jungle. There, amidst the dense trees and bushes, they lost their trail and returned home.

Kurpati, too, limped home with his mother's jewellery box under his arms. Pain wracked his body, but he did not seem to notice it. His eyes were shining with pride as he pushed open the door and cried into the house, "Mother! Father! We've got one of them, but the others have escaped!"

And turning to his mother, whose arm lay in a bandage, he added in a jubilant voice, "And here is your box, Mother. Nothing has been taken away."

Sigrun Srivastava



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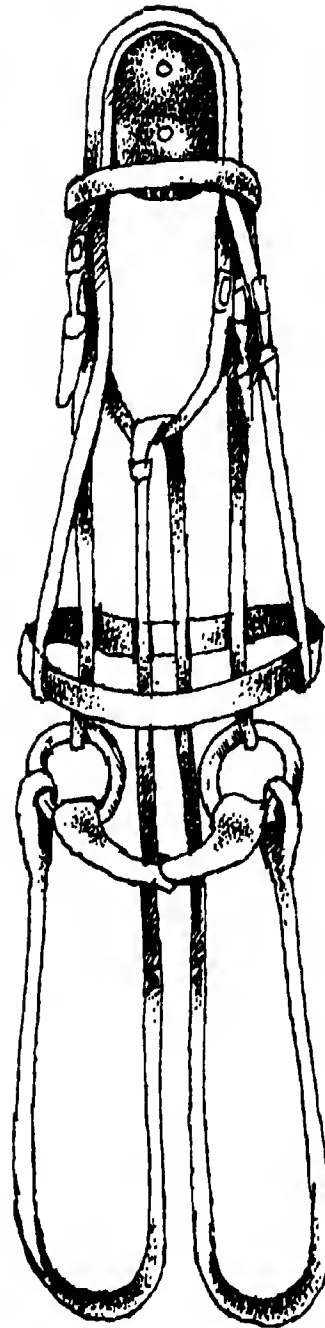
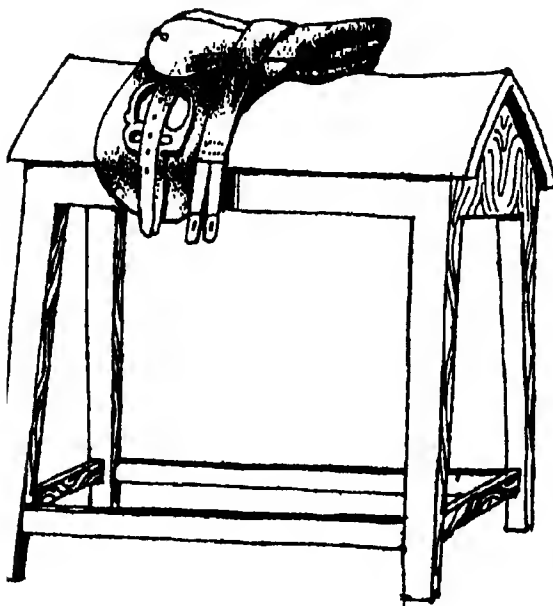
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**W**HAT is a saddle? The saddle is a seat for the rider. This is a must—at least for the novice. Later on, we can come to bareback riding—made famous by Red Indians and cowboys!

Before putting on a saddle, always make sure that the pony is tied up; otherwise it will wander around and play a bit of mischief, like nipping the rider! Having tied the pony, fetch the saddle and other accessories from the saddle room, or the “tack room” as some call it. Make sure that the saddle has the stirrup irons and the stirrup leathers on, and that the bridle is complete in all respects. Carry the saddle along the thigh with the front arch in the crook of the elbow. When you reach your pony, stand near the



shoulder of the animal, so that you are out of kicking and nipping range. Using your hands, smooth out the pony's coat where you will put the saddle. Pick up the saddle and place it lightly but firmly on the horse's withers. Make sure that the saddle is correctly placed; otherwise when you mount, you will be sitting on the horse's shoulders! This happens when the saddle is placed

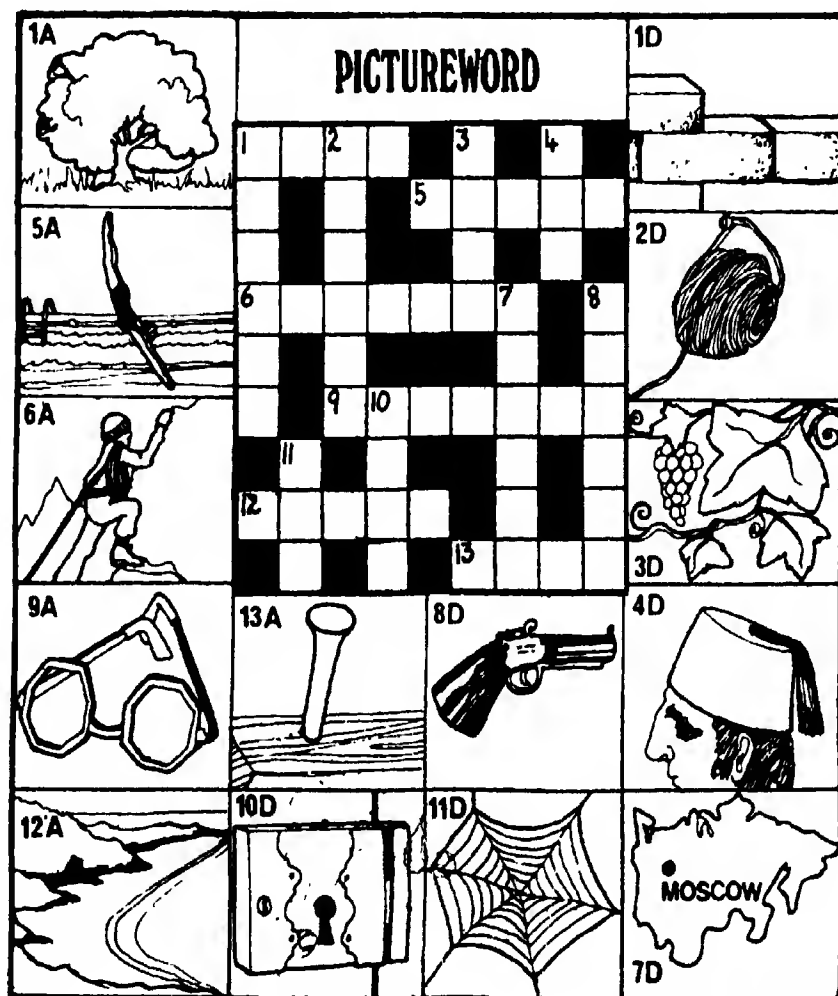
too much forward. Go round the front of the horse and check that everything is right. Make sure, otherwise you will be in for an uncomfortable ride.

### PUTTING ON A BRIDLE

Place the reins over the horse's head and neck. Now getting the bit or snaffle into the pony's mouth is the most tricky part. Guide the bit gently into the horse's mouth—coaxing him to open his mouth. There are so many straps and chains to be done up, so one should not get confused. Start at

the ears and work down—this will help you remember the order. The stirrups and girth should be loose now—check and tighten them before mounting. If a horse is left saddled, place the reins under the stirrups, otherwise the horse might put his head down and tread on the reins. Lead your horse out of the box into the open and check carefully. Saddle and bridle should be put perfectly. Your carelessness might cause a riding accident, and you and your pony can be seriously injured.

Sumitra Senapaty



(Solution next month)

(First Features)

Michael Arnold's

# SCIENCE SPOT

## DATING ANCIENT FINDS

**W**E all know that one of the greatest perils of the atom bomb is not the actual destructive blast, terrible though that may be, but the intense radioactivity that follows it.

However, not all radioactivity is bad. In controlled amounts, it is widely used in the medical world, in the form of X-rays — though X-ray operators have to be careful not to get an overdose of X-rays; it's also known that X-rays can sometimes have bad effects on unborn babies.

But one of the most interesting uses of radioactivity is as a reliable clock for the archaeologist. And the radioactive substance that makes this clock work is that most versatile of all the elements, carbon.

Carbon is the element that makes life possible. It combines readily with other elements, and indeed more than a million compounds involving carbon are known.

In its pure state, it has two well-known forms: one is diamond, the hardest natural substance; the other is graphite, the soft stuff that provides the so-called 'lead' for pencils.

Even atoms of the same element are not always identical. Some are heavier than others. These variations are known as **isotopes**. There are six isotopes of carbon, and four of them are radioactive.

### Decay rate

One of the characteristics of radioactive substances is that they decay.

Radioactivity means that they're throwing out particles all the time, and if they keep this up long enough, they change drastically. Uranium, for instance, eventually becomes lead, though it takes a very long time to do so.

Scientists calculate the rate of decay in half-lives — that is, the time taken for the amount of radioactive emission to fall by half. Three of the radioactive carbon isotopes have very short half-lives — in one case, less than  $2\frac{1}{2}$  seconds.

But one of them, known as Carbon 14, has a very useful half-life of about 5,700 years. It is present in all living things, in minute quantities. As long as the thing — plant or animal — stays alive, the level of Carbon 14 in it remains the same. But when it dies, the replacement of Carbon 14 stops.

Gradually, over the years, the remaining Carbon 14 disintegrates. This fact struck the American chemist, Professor Willard F. Libby of Chicago. During the 1940s, he and a team of students began researches to see whether this disintegration could be used as a kind of clock.

They discovered that by measuring the amount of Carbon 14 left in a fragment of bone or wood, they could calculate how long it had been dead. (The clock, you'll realise, only works for organic material — that is, material which was once alive.)

*(Turn to page 7)*

# JEEVAN AND HANDEEN KOLLA

## MINDING YOUR LANGUAGE

Thousands of years before mankind developed written language, primitive man expressed simple thoughts with crude drawings and paintings on cave walls. Lascaux in France contains many examples of this art-form.



This represents 'warriors'.

The ancient Egyptians (from about 3000 BC) worked out a system of pictures that stood for objects and ideas. These were called 'hieroglyphics'.



WEEP CATTLE WIDOW

Each of these signs also represented a spoken word. In time, these signs came to stand for only the approximate sound of the original word, not its meaning.



M WR ANKH

This system is still used in a simple game called the rebus. Pictures are used to spell out words. In the following rebus, the actual message has nothing to do with saws, ropes and so on. They spell out the line: **SOMEONE SAW MANY PEOPLE RACE BY**



SUM ONE SAW

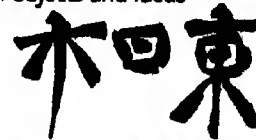


MEN-KNEE PEA-PULL



RACE BEE-EYE

Chinese writing (known as pictograms) also developed in the same way. Elaborate brush-strokes were simplified pictures of objects and ideas.



TREE + SUN = EAST  
(sun rising behind tree)



This brush-stroke originally meant 'pot', which was pronounced 'li'. Notice the resemblance. As the language grew, the meaning was discarded, and the sign stood for the sound 'li'. Today most languages have an alphabet, in which each sign indicates a particular spoken sound. The earliest Indian alphabet was called Brahmi. But pictures continue to be used! Take a close look at traffic signs, and you'll see.

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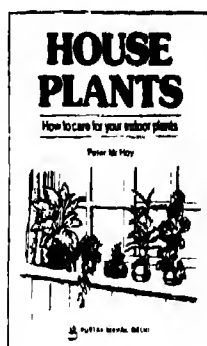
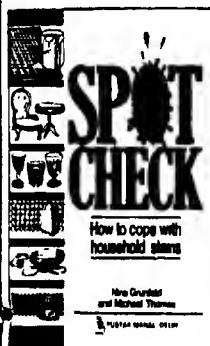
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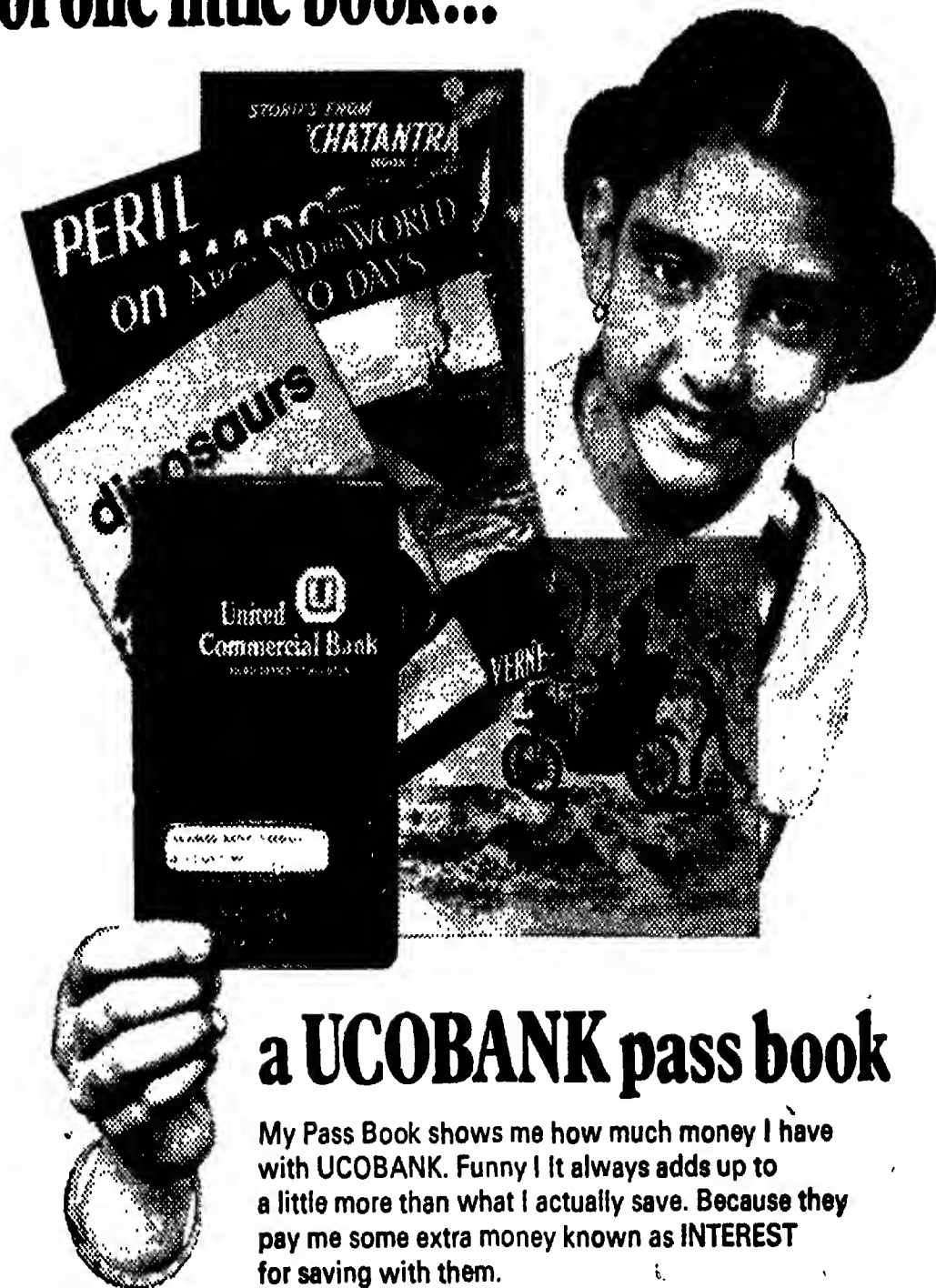


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**Cover of the Month: Transparency by Prem Kapoor**

© Children's World, 1983



# Two-Way Talk

*Dear Editor,*

Your magazine is really a hit. I have four sisters and they all love it. Your Independence Day Number was an explosion of things that show how superb it is. I come from Latin America. Therefore, I play the Spanish guitar. I request you to introduce a page for Music.

*Mary Ann Lugo, New Delhi*

"Children's World" really helps us children to form a bright future. I am really grateful to you for helping me to correct my mistakes in my poems.

*N. Vijaya, Madras*

I have a small suggestion. Would it be possible to set aside a page for poems from "outgrown" children? I am sure there are several others like myself who have forgone the opportunity. After all the poems that we write are meant for children.

*K. Sri Latha, Madurai*

I am really thrilled with *Children's World*. I have been reading the magazine since 1977. I find it very interesting, and so does my elder brother. But I do miss "Kapish". Please re-start Pen-friends Corner.

*Surapana Akerkar, Jamshedpur*

I would like to congratulate Kapil Dev and his team-mates — through *Children's World* for their magnificent performance in the Prudential Cup. It was indeed a tremendous achievement, and we Indians should be proud of it. I hope you will continue to give us descriptions of their matches with Pakistan and West Indies.

*Shajee Joseph, Bhilai*

*Dear Readers,*

At last, there is "music in the air", thanks to our friend from Latin America. How about a series on some of the peculiar musical instruments of different countries? Or biographical sketches of world famous musicians? We await suggestions from other music lovers among our readers. Sri Latha was "provoked" to make that suggestion about poems when we wrote to her that we prefer to publish poetry by children. Now that she and her friends assure us that their poems will be "addressed" to children, we can give them a chance, can't we? By the time this issue reaches your hands, our cricket-friends from Pakistan would have already gone through a part of their itinerary. Yes, we will be watching their progress vis-a-vis India's own performance a la Kapil Dev and his "Devils" as they have now come to be known. A 4-part feature on the cricket scene will begin in the next issue and will take in an account of the West Indian tour as well. A report on the Helsinki Games that waited for some exclusive photographs is also expected to get into the Special Number, to make it worth waiting for. October is a special month for the United Nations, as it celebrates the UN Day on October 24 every year. An exclusive feature on this great and noble organisation is scheduled for November along with the results of the Essay Contest we organised in collaboration with that body in September. The way our readers responded was something beyond our expectations.

**EDITOR**



THE next doll called out to King Bhaja before he actually turned to it. "Listen to my story", it said, "and then you can judge for yourself whether you are fit to sit on this throne or not."

"Go ahead," said the king, "I know my own worth, but let me hear what you've got to say, all the same."

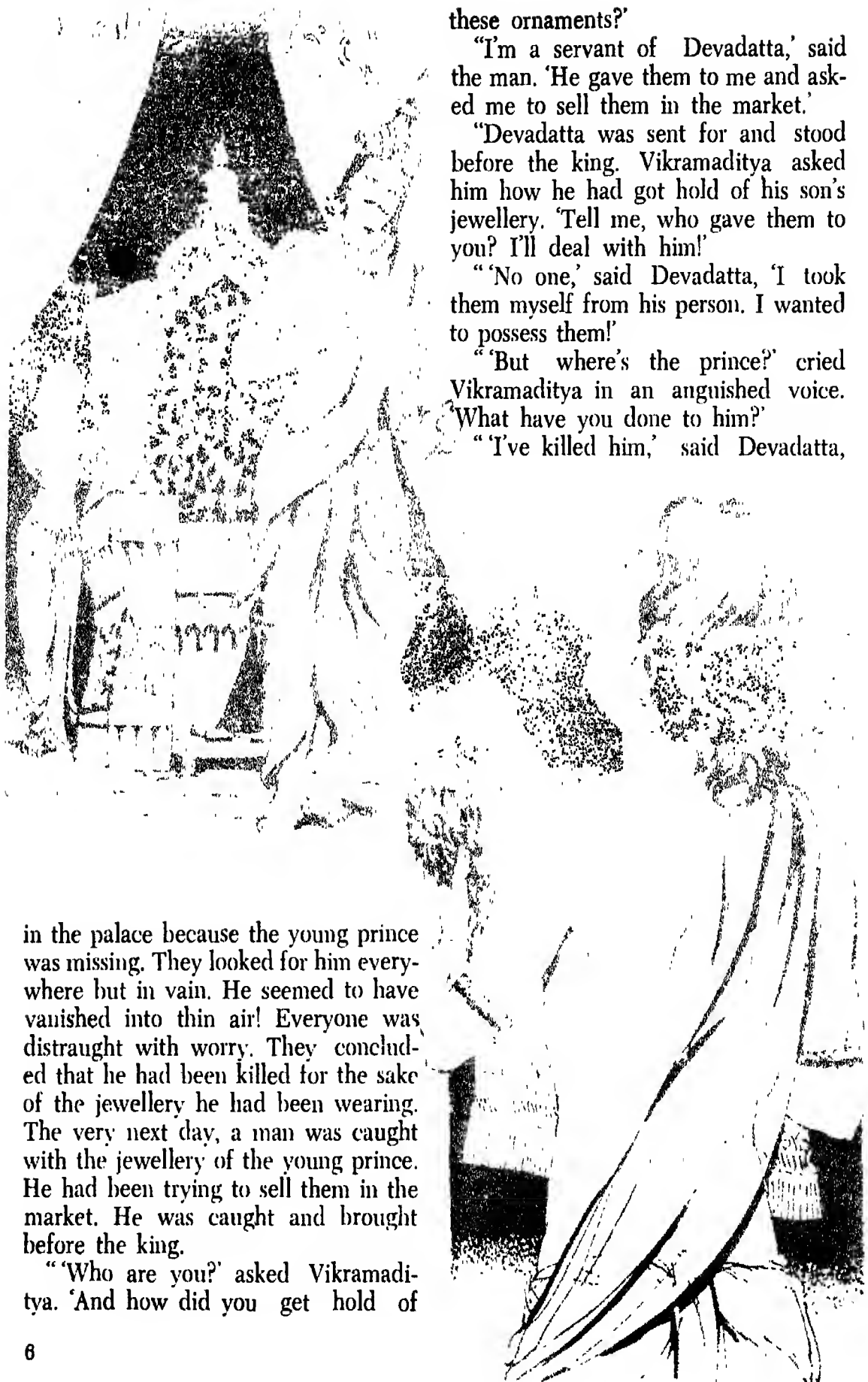
"I don't know what your concept of gratitude is, but I can tell you how the great Vikramaditya felt about it," said the doll. "Gratitude is the noblest of virtues, and the higher up you are, the more difficult it is to retain it. Once upon a time, there lived an old man in the kingdom of Vikramaditya. He had an only child called Devadatta who was very dear to him. The old man taught him all he knew and left on a pilgrimage.

"One day, Devadatta was roaming about in a dense forest where he had gone to collect firewood for a yajna, when he saw King Vikramaditya chasing a wild boar. He did not seem sure of his way, because he was hunt-

ing in the forest for the first time and it was exceptionally dense, too. Devadatta went to his help at once and showed him the way out of the forest, accompanying him all the way to his capital. The king was really pleased. And he felt grateful to Devadatta for taking the trouble. You see, the great Vikramaditya never took any one for granted. Not even his humble subjects, and he never forgot a good turn. He gave Devadatta a job and invited him to stay on in his capital. Devadatta, really well-settled now, lived happily. Years rolled by. Everyone forgot how Devadatta had once helped the king, including Devadatta himself. Only the king remembered.

"One day Devadatta heard Vikramaditya speaking of gratitude and how one should always remember help rendered by others in times of need. Devadatta wondered whether it was mere talk on the part of the king or if he really meant it. He decided to find out.

"The next day, there was utter chaos



these ornaments?

"I'm a servant of Devadatta," said the man. "He gave them to me and asked me to sell them in the market."

"Devadatta was sent for and stood before the king. Vikramaditya asked him how he had got hold of his son's jewellery. 'Tell me, who gave them to you? I'll deal with him!'"

"No one," said Devadatta, "I took them myself from his person. I wanted to possess them!"

"But where's the prince?" cried Vikramaditya in an anguished voice. "What have you done to him?"

"I've killed him," said Devadatta,

in the palace because the young prince was missing. They looked for him everywhere but in vain. He seemed to have vanished into thin air! Everyone was distraught with worry. They concluded that he had been killed for the sake of the jewellery he had been wearing. The very next day, a man was caught with the jewellery of the young prince. He had been trying to sell them in the market. He was caught and brought before the king.

"Who are you?" asked Vikramaditya. "And how did you get hold of

hanging down his head. 'It seemed the safest thing to do. I didn't know that I'd be caught. I must have been mad!'

"No sooner had he spoken a regular pandemonium broke out in the court. Everyone spoke at once. 'Hang him!' cried some. 'Behead him!' cried others. 'Cut him up into pieces and let the vultures feed on him!' cried some more. 'No sin can possibly be greater than killing an innocent child!'

"'Quiet, all of you!' said Vikramaditya, looking at Devadatta, who was now trembling like a leaf, his face whiter than ashes.

"'Don't be afraid, Devadatta,' he said in a quiet voice, 'nothing can happen without the will and sanction of the divine. If my son is dead, it is because he was destined to live a short life. In any case, I can't possibly harm you as you had once helped me in the past and brought me home safely. That would be ingratitude. Go home now and no one will harm you in any way.'

"Devadatta left the palace with a bent head and a very red face. He returned almost immediately. With him was the prince! Everyone stared at them, speechless with surprise. 'What does this mean?' cried Vikramaditya, his face ablaze with joy at the sight of his son.

"'He was safe with me all this time,' said Devadatta smiling, 'I merely wanted to test whether you meant what you said about gratitude, not forgetting a good turn!'

"Now Bhojaraj!" said the doll, "do you also feel the same way? Could you have behaved in the same manner and forgiven so easily and readily had it been your own son? And that too for merely showing you the way out of a forest? If you feel the same, you are worthy of this throne and I invite

you to ascend it!"

But King Bhoja looked the other way.

The king now turned from one doll to another, hoping for a word of welcome to ascend the throne. But all of them preferred to speak of the great Vikramaditya.

"Vikramaditya," said one of the dolls, "felt that one should only live for others. He had no time to think of himself. He considered no sacrifice too great if it brought happiness to another. His life was valuable only because it could be devoted to serving others. Now, listen to this story.

"There lived a rich merchant named Dhanada in Ujjain. Having amassed enormous wealth in his heydays, he decided to give it all up and go off to visit the various holy places. He made up his mind to go to the city of Dwara-vati first of all and offer his homage to Lord Krishna. He had to go by sea. He spotted a hilly island during his voyage. There was a large and beautiful temple atop the hill which Dhanada was eager to see. It was the temple of goddess Bhuwaneshwari. Having offered his worship to the goddess, Dhanada turned back to find the headless bodies of a man and a woman. On the stone tablet beside them the following words were carved: 'If any one worships the goddess with his own blood, this unfortunate couple will come alive once again.' Dhanada shuddered and went back the way he came. He continued his journey to Dwara-vati.

"On his return, Dhanada went to see King Vikramaditya and told him about his pilgrimage. When the king asked him if he had seen anything unusual during his journey, Dhanada mentioned his visit to the Bhuwanesh-

wari temple. Surprised and curious, Vikramaditya went to visit the temple himself. The two bodies were still there, along with their severed heads. Vikramaditya felt sorry for them and decided to give them life even though it meant sacrificing his own. He struck his throat with his sword, and as blood gushed out, the man and the woman assumed life as if by magic! Just then, the goddess appeared before the king and snatched the sword from his hands. 'I am pleased,' she said. 'Ask for any boon you like.'

"'I want nothing for myself,' said the king. 'If you are pleased, then

please let these two have their heart's desire and live happily ever after.'

"'So be it,' said the goddess."

The doll turned to the King Bhoja. "Well, Bhoja Raj, would you have sacrificed your life for two strangers in the first place or asked for such a boon?"

"Such actions came naturally to Vikramaditya, the owner of this throne," said another doll. "Listen to my story now, and you can judge for yourself how far you resemble the great Vikramaditya."

"A great king keeps close contact with his people and takes care to find out what is happening in the other parts of the kingdom. King Vikramaditya also had his troupe of newsmen, whose work was to gather news from every part of his kingdom and convey it to him. One day, as he sat in the royal court discussing important

*(Continued on page 11)*





*Dear Pins and Needles,*

And when I say that, I really do mean pins and needles—not the kind that run up and down your legs, but the other kind, the ones that jab your finger and poke your eye and prick your thumb and bruise your hand and pierce your patience. The ones that plagued me all last week.

The problem was, hmm—the problem was, well, I hope this does not spoil your image of me. I am really dashed worried about my image. You know, I am horse if there was one tied to the gate, or stamp on a cockroach—wild or otherwise—if it was near the bathroom. But the problem last week was something new, something that should not have been my problem at all, considering the kind of person I am, and the kind of image you all have of me; you know the stro— Anyway, last week, let me tell it to you before

anything else happens. Last week, I was asked to stitch a button on my shirt.

Is that all? I can hear some of you—especially the girls—saying that, with a little smile, a small shake of the head, a naughty gleam in the eye. Is that all? Let me tell you, dear thimbles, that it may be 'all' for you, but it isn't so for me.

For a start, how do you thread that X!Q!P!X! of a needle? Yes, yes, you put it through the eye, I know that. But how can a piece of thread that has a mind of its own be made to go through? I don't know what kind you use, but the kind I use or, rather, the kind I was given was one of those rebel types. It ran this way and that, when it should have gone straight, it bent, when it should have curved, it was as spiky as Raghu's back hair; it sulked, it pouted, it kept its eyes shut, and stuck out its tongue; in other words, it

was a numbskulled clothheaded, worm-brained, fossilised, prehistoric dinosaur of a piece of thread. Phew!

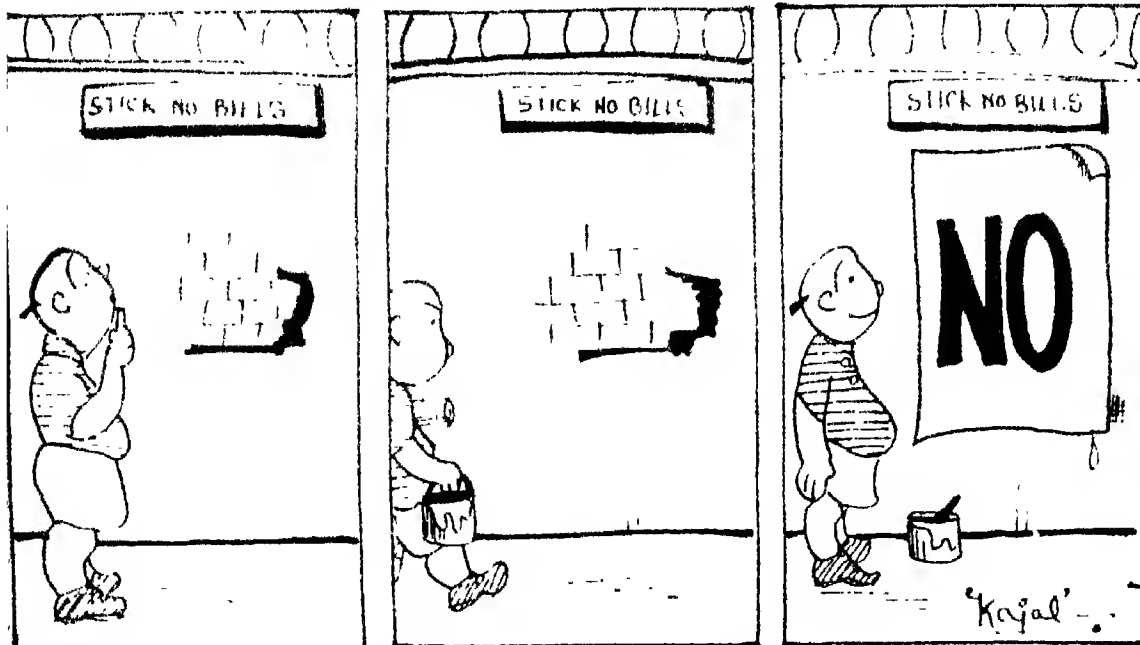
Then, finally, after holding the needle between the toes of my right foot and controlling the thread into both my hands and all ten fingers and thumbs (8 + 2), with my left foot ready

for any emergency, with my eyes as quick and alert as a military regiment in the forward area, I managed to thread the needle.

All right, so far, sew good. Sew good? Oooph! No! There was the button. The button was one of those that delighted in mischief. It gurgled in my hand and then gave a quick leap to the floor. I would dash under the bed to look for it, carve up the whole floor area, and there it would be, winking at me from near the door. I would pick it up; it would burp and suddenly slip on to my table, and nose at all my pencils. I would pick it up again; it would smile and dive, it would go, into the bed, under the bed cover, under the pillow, under under under the bed sheet, under under under under the mattress, under under under under—

You call it a button? It was a jumping bean with the energy of a popcorn machine.

Finally, after I lost the button sixty six and one eighth times and found it



sixty six thousand, seven hundred and fifty nine times, I realised, to my utmost horror, that the thread was out of the needle again and was lying there miles away, with a smile like curdled milk.

Would anyone please lend me some glue?

*Yours Stuck*  
*Pertoy*

---

*(Continued from page 8)*

measures with his ministers, one of the newsmen arrived from Kashmir and sought an interview with him.

"Sire," he said, without any preamble, 'there is a village in Kashmir suffering from acute scarcity of water. A local merchant has dug a huge lake. He has even erected a temple there, but there is not even a drop of water in the lake! They say the lake shall remain empty until a worthy man of noble birth offers himself in sacrifice. Naturally, no one is willing, and so the lake is dry to this day.'

"The king went there at once. 'Sire, you can't!' cried the minister in alarm.

"Why not?" said Vikramaditya. 'No man lives for ever! If one life—that is mine—can make so much difference to so many thousands of villagers, then the sacrifice is well worth it. Don't stop me.' He knelt down in prayer and drew out his sword to strike himself, but the goddess of the river appeared just then and stopped him. 'Turn back and look at the lake', she said. The lake was full of crystal clear water! So you see, even gods protect a noble man. Could you offer your life so that a lake in a far away village might be full and thus bring comfort to the poor villagers? Could you even think of doing

it?" taunted the doll.

As King Bhoja stood silent, the next doll related her story. "Listen to me, Bhoja Raj," it said, "and I can relate a similar episode. King Vikramaditya often roamed about in disguise to find the actual state of affairs within his kingdom. He went out to distant lands as well. Once he got to hear of a place named Palash. The people there lived in constant terror of a demon who ate up a villager each day. The families took it in turns to provide him with a meal and give up a member. Vikramaditya went to Palash and offered himself to the demon, who was surprised to see him. 'You do not belong to this village! Why have you come here then?' Vikramaditya smiled and said, 'So that I may spare at least one family from intense grief tonight.' These words—spoken from the heart—moved the demon so much that he promised the king that he would never harm another human life as long as he lived. And he kept his promise.

The doll turned to King Bhoja again. 'King Vikramaditya's name is immortal because he never thought of his own self. Have you his selflessness, Bhoja Raj? And do you even hope to attain it?' Once again, King Bhoja had no answer.

**Bublee**



cide to use my whistle. I hope the policeman will mistake my whistle for the whistle of another policeman and rush in.

In a trice, I pull out the whistle and blow hard. The sharp piercing sound fills the whole park. The men, who are busy binding the mouth of the sack, stop and look around, unsure of the source of the sound. Then they see the constable moving towards them. They leave the sack and start running. The policeman chases them. He nabs one of them.

I come down from the tree. I help the girl come out of the sack. The policeman sees the whistle in my hand. He tells me, "Ah, you whistled for help, didn't you? I thought it was another policeman's whistle," and he ties up the arms of the criminal with his

own turban. The constable pats me and says, "You saved this girl. You whistled at the right moment. You are a clever boy."

I look at the girl. She smiles at me. She says, "Thank you. Thank you for the help. I will tell my Papa."

Later, I tell my parents how I saved Lala Jagannath's daughter. "All because of my whistle, Dad," I tell my father. "My whistle has power," I tell my mother. My parents nod.

I think I can now whistle whenever I like. I reach out for the whistle. But my parents tell me, "No, Ramu, you don't whistle at home."

That is why I say, parents are funny people. Aren't they?

R. K. Murthi



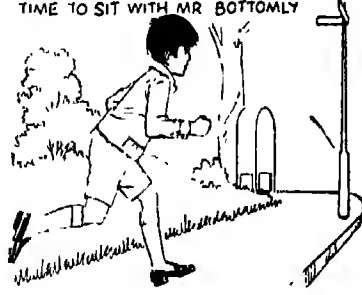
## TALES FOR CHILDREN

# SCOTTY AND THE STORY-TELLER

IN JUST A FEW MORE MINUTES ALL THE NOISE WOULD STOP. THE DRILLS WOULD STOP DRILLING AND THE HAMMERS WOULD STOP HAMMERING AND ONCE AGAIN THE WORKERS WOULD CARRY THEIR LUNCH BOXES TO THE LITTLE PARK ACROSS THE WAY TO EAT.

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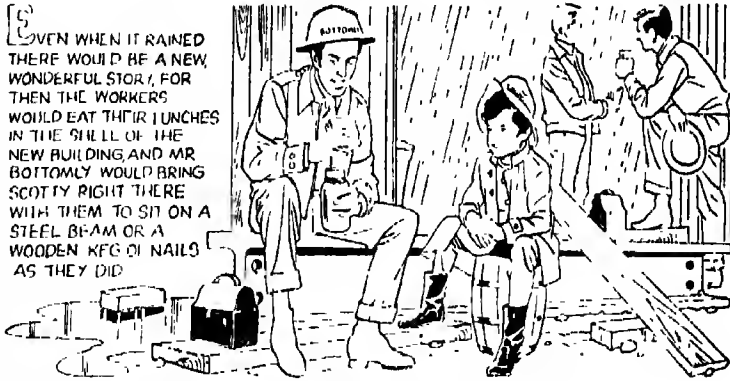
THAT'S WHAT SCOTTY WAS WAITING FOR. HE ALWAYS ATE HIS LUNCH AT HOME EARLY SO THAT HE COULD BE THERE IN TIME TO SIT WITH MR. BOTTOMLY.



MR. BOTTOMLY WAS ONE OF THE WORKERS ON THE NEW BUILDING THEY WERE PUTTING UP IN THE TOWN SQUARE AND EVER SINCE THE DAY SCOTTY MET HIM, MR. BOTTOMLY WOULD TELL HIM A STORY EACH DAY AT LUNCH TIME.



EVEN WHEN IT RAINED THERE WOULD BE A NEW, WONDERFUL STORY. FOR THEN THE WORKERS WOULD EAT THEIR LUNCHES IN THE SHILL OF THE NEW BUILDING AND MR. BOTTOMLY WOULD BRING SCOTTY RIGHT THERE WITH THEM TO SIT ON A STEEL BEAM OR A WOODEN KEG OF NAILS AS THEY DID.



THERE WAS ONLY ONE TROUBLE WITH THIS WONDERFUL STORY-TELLING HOUR AND THAT WAS MR. GIBBON.



OH, THAT NASTY MR. GIBBON! IT WAS MR. GIBBON WHO WOULD END THE STORY-TELLING EVERY DAY.

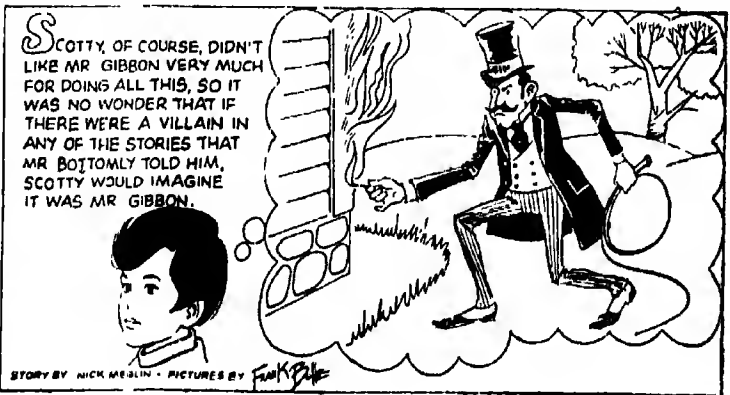
IT WAS MR. GIBBON WHO WOULD BLOW HIS NASTY WHISTLE WHICH WOULD END THE LUNCH PERIOD FOR THE WORKERS.



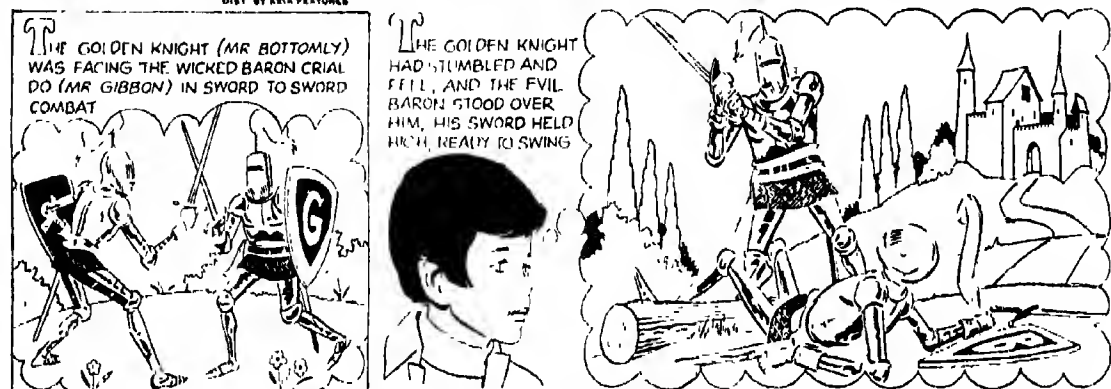
IT WAS MR. GIBBON WHO WOULD SAY, "SORRY, SCOTTY, BUT IT'S WORK TIME," AND MAKE MR. BOTTOMLY RETURN TO THE NOISE OF THE HAMMERS AND DRILLS.

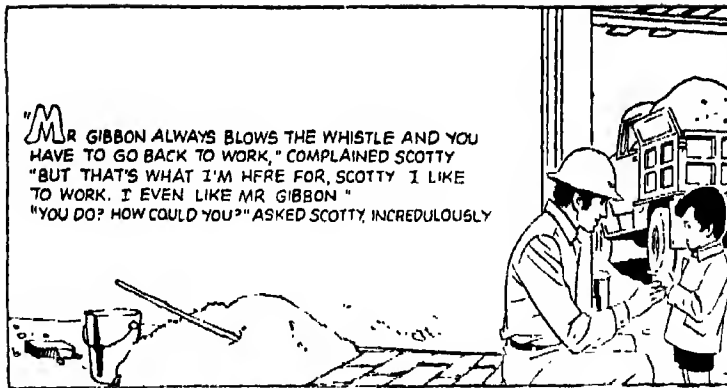


SCOTTY, OF COURSE, DIDN'T LIKE MR. GIBBON VERY MUCH FOR DOING ALL THIS, SO IT WAS NO WONDER THAT IF THERE WERE A VILLAIN IN ANY OF THE STORIES THAT MR. BOTTOMLY TOLD HIM, SCOTTY WOULD IMAGINE IT WAS MR. GIBBON.



STORY BY NICK MARLIN - PICTURES BY FRED K. PETER





"MR GIBBON ALWAYS BLOWS THE WHISTLE AND YOU HAVE TO GO BACK TO WORK," COMPLAINED SCOTTY "BUT THAT'S WHAT I'M HERE FOR, SCOTTY I LIKE TO WORK. I EVEN LIKE MR GIBBON " "YOU DO? HOW COULD YOU?" ASKED SCOTTY, INCREDULOUSLY

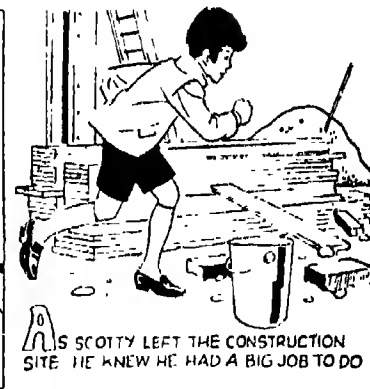
WELL, LET'S PUT IT THIS WAY WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP? "A FIREMAN " "AND ARE YOU GOING TO DISLIKE THE FIRE CHIEF?" "OF COURSE NOT HE'LL BE MY BEST FRIEND "



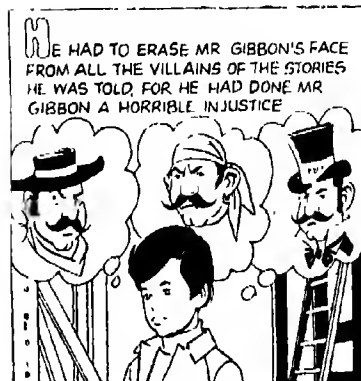
THAT'S RIGHT WELL WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE I WANTED TO BUILD THINGS HOUSES OFFICE BUILDINGS, SCHOOLS EVERYTHING "



SO I BECAME A CARPENTER AND I STILL LIKE TO BUILD THINGS I LOVE MY WORK AND MR GIBBON IS MY FOREMAN HE LETS ME DO WHAT I LIKE TO DO BEST HE'S MY FRIEND JUST LIKE THE FIRE CHIEF WILL BE YOUR FRIEND "



AS SCOTTY LEFT THE CONSTRUCTION SITE HE KNEW HE HAD A BIG JOB TO DO



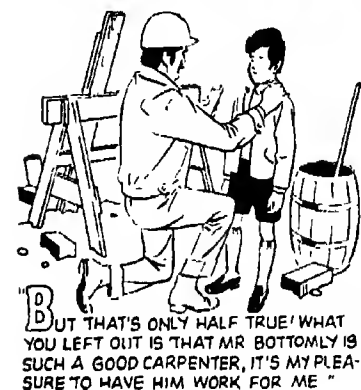
HE HAD TO ERASE MR GIBBON'S FACE FROM ALL THE VILLAINS OF THE STORIES HE WAS TOLD, FOR HE HAD DONE MR GIBBON A HORRIBLE INJUSTICE



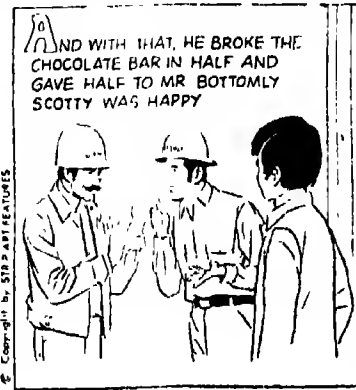
AS HE PASSED THE CANDY STORE HE REMEMBERED THE NICKEL HE HAD IN HIS JACKET POCKET AND WENT IN HE SOON CAME OUT AGAIN WITH A CHOCOLATE BAR AND WENT STRAIGHT OVER TO MR GIBBON



HERE, MR GIBBON THIS IS FOR LETTING MR BOTTOMLY WORK ON YOUR BUILDINGS " "WHY THANK YOU, SCOTTY," ANSWERED THE SURPRISED FOREMAN



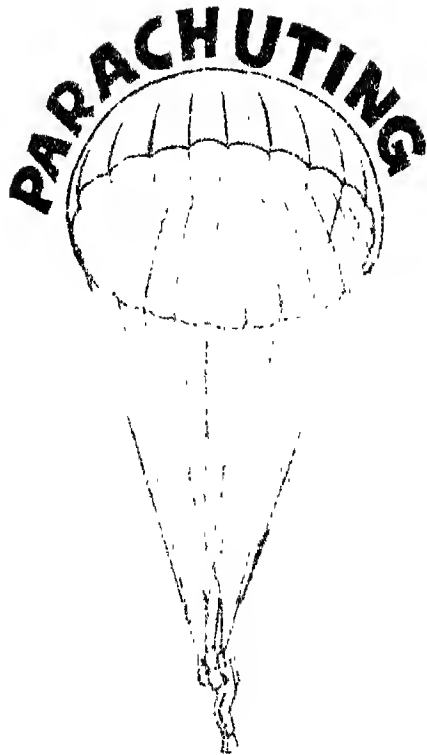
BUT THAT'S ONLY HALF TRUE! WHAT YOU LEFT OUT IS THAT MR BOTTOMLY IS SUCH A GOOD CARPENTER, IT'S MY PLEASURE TO HAVE HIM WORK FOR ME "



AND WITH THAT, HE BROKE THE CHOCOLATE BAR IN HALF AND GAVE HALF TO MR BOTTOMLY SCOTTY WAS HAPPY



FROM THAT DAY ON ALL THE LUNCH TIME STORIES HAD TWO HEROES-- AND NO VILLAINS AT ALL



### THE MEN AND THE MEANS

**S**OME ONE described parachute jumping as dicing with death in the skies, a frightful phrase, quite apart from being grossly untrue.

What manner of men are these who wear the maroon red beret. They are firstly all volunteers, and are then toughened by hard physical training. As a result they have that infectious optimism and that offensive eagerness which comes from physical well being. They have jumped from the air and by so doing have conquered fear. They have the highest standard in all things, whether it be skill in battle or smartness in the execution of all peace time duties. Their duty lies in the van of the battle; they are proud of this honour and have never failed in any task. They have shown themselves to be as tenacious and determined in defence as they are courageous in attack. They are, in fact, 'men apart' — every man an em-

peror'. They have rightly earned for themselves the name of the 'Red Devils' bestowed upon them in North Africa by an enemy who had good cause to fear their prowess.

The first parachute drop was made by the 'pull off' method in which the jumper crouched on an inadequate platform fashioned by removing the rear, pulled the ripcord and was whirled instantly into space. This was in fact very difficult and was abruptly discontinued as the trainees were all casualties. They were in fact victims of the phenomenon, always to be dreaded, known as 'a Roman candle' in which the parachute leaves the bag but fails to fill with air and streams behind the jumper affording him no means of support. So the inevitable change occurred and the 'dakota' was finally introduced for parachute training. In this, the exit was by a door, a method of leaving far safer and more practical.

Thus in this, as in so many other fields, the inspired amateur was given his test to be a paratrooper. He did his best and if men's lives were lost it might be his misfortune, it was certainly not his fault. The paratrooper risked his own life time and again jumping to ascertain whether such and such a method of stowing the rigging lives in the parking bag was foolproof or to discover the right speed and angle at which the aircraft should fly when men were being dropped. They were not trained parachutists to the standards that were established later because no really scientific technique for parachute flying or landing had been devised. The fact remains that it was not until by the inevitable process of trial and error that the parachute itself and the method of using it was modified.

The parachute jump instructors learn

the art of jumping with speed and reach a high standard of skill. They wear no insignia to denote their calling and rarely go into areas that qualify for awards. They are totally unsung and only the men under their instruction really appreciate the patience and cold blooded courage that is theirs.

Leaping from a balloon had begun much earlier. The first experiment was carried out by three Britishers. Their report on the possibility of using balloons was favourable. There were certain great advantages. The tendency of the paratrooper to twist in the air or to somersault, which he was very liable to do when jumping from an aircraft owing to the impact of the slipstream in his body was almost eliminated. The instructor on the ground below could control his movements through a megaphone. On the other hand, the jumper having no slipstream to aid him, had to fall a far longer distance before his parachute fully opened.

Jumping from a balloon was made an integral part of parachute training. The men used to sit in the balloon baskets positioned for jumping. The interior of the baskets were exactly similar to the gymnasium trapezes — a large round hole with a platform around it. One sat on the edge of the hole with one's hands gripping the rim behind one in a position of attention and then when the time came to jump, thrusts oneself forward, bringing one's hands to one's side, heels down and feet together in a rigid position of attention. Exit accidents were rare but accidents on landing were not so uncommon. Whenever one lands, no matter how level the ground; poise and quick mental action are essential. One has to position himself for the correct roll while in the air — knees bent, feet together and paral-

lel to the ground be it up or down and elbows bent and drawn into the body.

The routine for jumping never varies. Shortly before it is time to jump, a red light goes on and the parachutists are set for jumping. As soon as a green light appears No 1 jumps, followed in quick succession by the remaining jumpers. Leaving an aeroplane, one knows considerably less about the uncomfortable interim period of hurtling through space than on a balloon jump. This is entirely due to a highly technical sounding phenomenon known as the slip stream. The slip stream takes charge of you thoroughly and completely. It simply, and almost, it seems, apologetically, whisks you away from the plane on to the end of your parachute. Just as easy as that. Then, if you are the right way up, your legs are whipped up so that you seem likely to kick your own nose, and you feel as if your fall has been arrested by a giant hand grabbing your braces.

The canopy of the parachute is usually made of nylon, though sometimes of cotton, and has a diameter of 28 feet. In the middle of it is a circular hole, the vent 22 inches in diameter. This vent prevents undue strain on the canopy when it begins to open, and is said to reduce oscillation. The rigging lines attaching the canopy to the harness are 22 feet long. To the parachute harness is attached a bag carried on the back. In it is housed the parachute in an internal bag divided into two compartments. The outside bag remains attached to the harness; the inside is pulled violently from it by a static line, which is a length of webbing, of which one end is attached strongly to the inner bag. At the other end is a metal D ring, which engages a hook attached to the

*(Continued on page 35)*



**I**T was around 2 a.m. I had just come home from work. As I undressed, I heard the patter of rain outside. It was like soft music.

I went out to the balcony. Most of it was dry under the lintel. As I looked around, I saw a strange, dimly lit world of books and lawns and foot-paths. It was silent and yet filled with the soft music of the rain.

Moments passed. I became unaware of the falling rain. I only heard its sound. It seemed to be the voice of the night. What it said, I did not know. But it was soft and sweet, and I listened.

Just then I heard another sound. It was that of the wind in the trees in front. There were two trees, one short and shaggy, and the other rather tall and spreading.

I listened to the two sounds. One was near me—the sound of the rain, falling softly and steadily on all sides. The other was in the trees—the sighing of the wind, above the non-stop

patter. They were like two voices of the night, close but not confused.

The two voices? I heard a third too. I cannot say whether it had already been there or it came just then. It was the croaking of the frogs from across the blocks.

Distance softened it. It was like the whisper of the wind, though huskily above it. There was no mix-up, no discord. It was as though the three voices had respect for one another. Each let the other two be heard clearly.

The rain kept falling. It did not slow down or increase. You would say the clouds had so planned it. Neither reckless spending nor stingy saving!

I looked at the lamp-post by the path over there. It stood like a gaunt but vigilant guard. The yellow light of the bulb was not much, but it spread cheer around. If it went out, an eerie blackness would fill the place.

Beyond the path lay the main road.

*(Continued on page 35)*





### THE STORY SO FAR

Examinations over, Biju and Pratap and their friends decide to remind their master, Rajasekhar, of his promise of a picnic. 'Police' Appu - a nickname he earned for his daredevil acts - Smitha, Vinita, Gopi, and John accompany them to the Staff room. Smitha suggests the Dam. But that is rather far away. Appu mentions Kali Hills. But who will want to go there even in broad daylight? Rajasekhar mentions the ancient Koickal Palace and tells them that their teacher, Sarada, too, will join them for the picnic!

On Sunday, the children are all excited as they get into the school bus. They forget themselves in singing and chatting till they reach Koickal Palace an hour-and-a-half later. They all move about the 17th century Palace. Later, they adjourn to the park ground. After lunch, the children are allowed to roam about in the garden. Appu,

Pratap, Biju, and John reach the nearby forest from where they have a good view of the Kali Hills. John wonders why people are so scared of the hills. Pratap has a story to tell them. It appears the ancient temple was built by a sage. The idol depicted 'Bhadrakali' in an angry mood and was frightening to look at. Little wonder that nobody went there. The few who dared to go up the hill and the temple with any intention other than worship had all met with tragedy. Pratap adds that the place now only echoes strange noises. All this is "nonsense" to Appu. He assures his friends that he will one day go up the hill and show them that "these stories are just rubbish". Soon it's time to go home. "We've had a nice time," remarks Appu, little knowing what is in store for them.

As they board the bus, one of them is found missing - Vinita! She was last seen



in the rose garden. Where has she disappeared? Rajasekhar and some of the boys comb the garden, park, and the forest area around. There is no trace of the little girl. Rajasekhar stays back to continue the search and sends the others home with instructions to inform the headmaster, police, and Vinita's mother, Mrs. Panicker. She recovers from the initial shock and arranges for a telegram to go to her husband, a Customs official in Bombay. The police are duly alerted, and by the time they all settle down to think of further steps, Rajasekhar comes back. He has drawn a blank.

After a restless night, Appu reaches Pratap's house early next morning. The two are soon joined by Biju. They decide not to sit idle but think of a plan of action. They go to Koickal Palace, where they avoid being seen by their master, headmaster, and Vinita's mother. They make their way to another part of the Palace and come across a door they had not seen the previous day. They ask the guard to let them in. He tells them it is the place the Maharajah once used as his chamber and is not open to visitors. According to him, the lock had not been opened for several years!

The owner of the tea-shop, where the boys go for a quick bite, does not know much about Anand, except that he is a frequent visitor, and was at the Palace the previous day! The boys go to the garden where Vinita was last seen. As they comb the area, Pratap picks up a blood-smeared handkerchief from the bushes. From their hiding place, they all see the door to the chamber open and Shankar coming from inside! They watch him for a while, and then go back home.

The next morning, the three friends reach Vinita's house to find that her father has arrived from Bombay. Mr. Panicker introduces them to his old classmate, Mr. Khan, now Superintendent of Police, and continues to explain how the customs people spread

their net over a gang of antique smugglers and arrested one of them, Reddy, and received from him three idols and a lamp of great value. They tried to keep the arrest a top secret and were naturally puzzled when they began getting telephone calls from influential persons to release him. They were able to get a lot of details from Reddy about the gang. His interrogation was going on, Mr. Panicker says, when he received news of Vinita's disappearance and rushed home.

Mr. Khan says someone must be on a prank to extort money and Vinita should be safe, and suggests they should wait for the Inspector to come back from the Palace. Mr. Panicker is impatient and Mr. Khan agrees to their proceeding to the Koickal Palace once again. As they are about to get into Mr. Khan's car, he picks up an envelope. It is addressed to Mr. Panicker. On reading the contents, his face turns pale. The message says: "You release Reddy, we release Vinita".

Meanwhile, Appu, Biju, and Pratap on their way home are accosted by the proprietor of Vinod Studio. Mr. Vinod gives them some photographs to be handed to their master, Rajasekhar. Who wants to see the picnic photos and be reminded of a tragedy? Pratap keeps the envelope safe. At home, while he eats lunch, his sister Beena runs through the photos. There is a nice picture of Vinita running after a butterfly. But who's the bearded man behind her? Pratap has no difficulty in recognising him.

It is Anand. When Biju and Appu see the photograph they decide to go to the Palace to rescue Vinita. But Pratap says no. They must inform her parents first. Mr. Panicker and Mr. Khan have already left for the Palace when the children reach there. Mrs. Panicker tells them about the smugglers gang. Immediately they start for the Palace. But they have to wait an hour before they can get a bus. Half way through it breaks down and they have no choice but

to take a lift on a bullock cart. By the time they reach Koickal Palace, the police, Mr. Panicker and Mr. Khan have already left. What are they to do now? It is pouring and it is impossible to go back. The children walk around the Palace and discover the lock to the Maharajah's chamber open. Appu makes a dash for it. Biju and Pratap follow him.

It is dark and silent inside. Appu takes out his torch and is about to switch it on when they hear faint voices coming from a

distance. Soon the voices grow louder and light falls on the ceiling. Pratap signals to his friends and they hide behind the almirah. Three men are climbing some steps. Two of them they can recognise. Anand and Shankar. The third is a short, bald man. They are talking amongst themselves. The short, bald man gives Shankar a packet to put in the almirah saying he is going to Bombay the day after and would take it along. Then they leave locking the door from outside.

## CHAPTER 8: At the End of a Tunnel

THE three boys remained silent for a few moments. Then Appu got up and switched on his torch. The boys looked around the room. It was quite large, but mostly empty, except for a pile of broken chairs, cots, and other old-fashioned furniture in a corner.

Further away, there was a flight of steps that went down. Led by Appu, they moved towards the stairs. "Let's find out where this leads to," said Appu, prompting the others.

"We may be walking into danger." Biju cautioned. "God alone knows what is at the other end of these steps."

"I don't think we've a choice," said Pratap, thoughtfully. "If we just sit in this room, waiting for the door to be opened, we have no idea how long we may have to wait. What's more, if they find us hiding here, we'll be in trouble, too. From their conversation, it is more or less clear, this place has some connection with Vinita's kidnapping. Maybe she is kept somewhere here. So, instead of waiting here, why not do some investigation? With some luck, we may get some clue about her whereabouts. Even if we get caught, isn't it better they catch us doing something instead of our waiting to be caught? So, let's go."

Biju could not think of anything to counter Pratap's reasoning. So, he also went along, reluctantly though.

Appu always left the thinking part to Pratap. He preferred action. Now that Pratap, too, had agreed with him, he was all enthusiasm.

They came down the stairs slowly. The steps became narrower and narrower as they went down. Appu shone his torch on the steps.

"Use the torch sparingly," advised Pratap. "For one thing, we've a long night before us and we've to use this till day-break. If this is a tunnel, even daybreak is not going to help us. Secondly, if there are people anywhere here, the light is sure to attract their attention."

After about thirty steps, they reached plain ground. Appu again shone his torch and they examined the surroundings. It was a tunnel about four feet wide and six feet high. Appu could touch the roof with his fingertips if he stretched his hand a bit.

They moved forward in single file. Appu was in front, Biju kept himself in the middle, and Pratap made the rear.

They could advance only very slowly. Appu had to feel his way with his hands and legs. The others also had to do the

same, as they could not see each other in the darkness. Several times Biju bumped into Appu. Pratap, too, collided with Biju more than once.

The journey seemed endless. Biju felt he had been walking for hours. They had no idea where they were going. In fact, Appu had a feeling that they were going round and round. But Pratap felt sure that they were proceeding in the same direction, whatever it was. But walking in such total darkness was also terrifying.

The boys began to feel tired. They had not eaten anything for several hours. The long walk without food had its effect on the boys. The increasing heat in the tunnel made the trek more and more difficult.

Biju tried to be brave. At every step, he hoped, one of them would suggest they could stop the tiring walk. But, Appu at least seemed to be enjoying it.

They walked on and on and on. Biju's grit was fast wearing out. He decided to tell them that he would not be able to move any farther. He was, in fact, moistening his lips to speak when some cool air hit his face.

He walked a couple of steps. Yes, a cool breeze was coming in. It was so refreshing.

"At last!" said Appu. "There's some movement in the air." His voice clearly showed that he, too, was longing for fresh air and a respite from the tiresome walk. This was most comforting to Biju. Soon, stuffy atmosphere gave way to cool, fresh air. The tunnel was also growing larger and larger. And they could hear the sound of falling water.

Presently, they entered something like an open space. The sound of water could be heard on one side. After waiting for a while, Appu switched on his torch. Yes, it was a fairly large space open on one side. There was a waterfall virtually covering the open side. But the way towards the waterfall was full of huge boulders.

Appu went in the direction of the waterfall. He stepped on a rock, slipped, and fell. He got up soon and was happy that he did not hurt himself.

"Come over, we can rest here," shouted Appu, shining his torch. He had to shout at the top of his voice to be heard above



the din of the waterfall.

All three of them now took their seats on boulders. It was cool and comfortable. Biju felt sleepy. He yawned and stretched himself on the rock itself. "I think I'm going to sleep here," he said.

"Sleep and comfort, that's the only thing you can think of!" Appu said mockingly. "I'm going to explore further after a few minutes' rest."

Both Appu and Biju looked in the direction of Pratap for his opinion, without realising that they could not see each other! Pratap was searching the area with the help of Appu's torch. Soon, he found a tiny stream flowing on one side. The water was crystal clear. He took the water in his palms and drank it, once, twice, and again, till he was satisfied. Appu and Biju also enjoyed the cold water to their hearts' content. It refreshed the boys immensely. They forgot their tiredness, hunger, and sleep. Another ten minutes, and they started again.

The tunnel continued to run from the open space. It seemed to narrow down at first, but afterwards it slowly widened. But it was again the same story. The boys advanced in darkness with outstretched hands feeling for obstacles. It was a regular path, with near smooth walls. But the ground was slightly uneven.

It looked as though it was an unending stretch. The boys grew tired. Their legs were aching. It had once again become stuffy and hot. They wished they could sit down for a while. But the middle of a narrow tunnel was no place for taking rest. Besides, none of them wanted to be the first to disclose that he was tired. Each waited for the other to do that! Meanwhile, the journey continued. Suddenly, Pratap felt that he had seen Appu's head in a silhouette. It meant there was some light somewhere. About five steps later, he saw that again.

"I think I can see some light ahead," said Pratap.

"I don't see anything. It's pitch dark." Biju's anger and frustration was clear from his voice. But soon, some light could be seen ahead.

"Let's watch what it is," said Pratap. "Now we must progress very slowly and not speak a word."

They moved slowly and silently. The light became clearer. The tunnel also seemed to be growing larger. They felt that once again they were near an open space. Now they could see each other, though not very clearly.

The light was actually from a house. They walked further keeping close to the wall. Things were clearer now. To the right of where the tunnel ended, there was a large building. It stood several steps above the path in front. Lights were on in two rooms. There was a small bulb burning outside, too.

Pratap was walking with his eyes on the house when he stumbled over a jutting rock. He tried to be calm, but the intense pain made him utter a low scream. He sat down and looked at the injured toe. His toenail had come off and blood was flowing from the wound.

Appu and Biju also sat down. Biju took out his handkerchief, folded it, and tied it around Pratap's toe after putting the nail in position. He worked with the efficiency of a doctor. Soon the flow of the blood ceased.

"I shall rest here for a while," said Pratap. Helped by Biju, he moved back a little and leaned against the wall.

"Yes, you be here while we go and take a look around the house," said Appu. He moved towards the house, accompanied by Biju.

"Be careful," Pratap called out. He watched them climb the steps. A huge pillar obstructed his vision of the house. He had to strain his neck to see them. The pillar cast a shadow, and he thus sat in near darkness.

Appu reached the main door of the house, when a shout pierced the air. "Who's there?"

A big-built man, with a large moustache, appeared from the farther end of the house. Appu was taken aback by his sudden appearance. Biju turned back to run, but there was another man standing there, facing him.

"What're you two doing here?" asked the second man. "How did you come here?"

Neither Appu nor Biju could think of an answer.

"I think I've seen these boys earlier," said the first man. "Now, where was it? Yes, yes, they were at Panicker's house yesterday morning. Now come on," he continued in a threatening voice, "how did you reach here?"

Still there was no answer. Appu looked defiant. But Biju had started shivering.

"They must be friends of the little girl. Let them spend sometime near her," said the man with the big moustache. He held Appu by his arm and pushed him towards the door. Appu tried to resist, but could do little against the iron grip of the man. Biju easily obeyed when the second man pushed him. The moustachioed man opened the main door and the two dragged in the boys.

After about two minutes the men came out. "I hope this business ends soon. I don't like holding innocent children like this," said the smaller man.

Radhakrishnan

*(To be continued)*



**Our Story:** THE SECOND DAY'S COMPETITION BEGINS AT NOON. IN THE MORNING KAREN TOURS SALONAE WITH ALP ARSLAN. THEY SAVOR THE SMELL OF HOT CAKES AND OF A HIRED GUIDE'S LIES. "THIS IS THE POOL IN WHICH NARCISSUS DROWNED," HE EXPLAINS AS KAREN ROCKS WITH RATHER TOO MUCH LAUGHTER. WHEN ALP STEADIES HER...



SHE STEALTHILY SLIPS THE LAD'S KNIFE FROM ITS SHEATH, CASTING IT BEHIND. "THAT WILL COST HIM!" SHE THINKS.



ONLY AS THE KNIFE-THROWING EVENT APPROACHES DOES ALP NOTICE THE LOSS. HIS PARTNER PRINCE VALIANT HAS EARNED HIGH POINTS. BUT FORCED TO BORROW AN UNFAMILIAR BLADE, ALP VENTURES WITHIN A HAIR'S BREADTH OF MURDER. HE AND VAL SLIP INTO SECOND PLACE.



THEY RECOUP WITH SWORDPLAY. THE MASKED OLD MAN IS AGILE BUT HIS ARMS ARE WEAK; VAL TRIUMPHS. BUT THE MASKED YOUNGSTER FIGHTS LONG AND HARD, RETIRING ONLY WITH A BLADE AT HIS THROAT. BY NIGHTFALL, VAL AND ALP, ALONG WITH THE STRANGERS, ARE FAR IN THE LEAD.



YET ALP IS STILL TROUBLED ABOUT THE MISSING KNIFE. "KAREN? ARE YOU THERE?" HE CALLS INTO THE DARKENED ROOM AT THE INN.



BUT IT IS VALETA WHO SITS BY THE FIRE AS ALP SPILLS OUT HIS TALE. "VALETA TOOK YOUR KNIFE, I'M SURE," SHE SAYS, PRETENDING TO BE KAREN. "SHE IS VERY SHY... BUT VERY MUCH IN LOVE. THE THOUGHT OF YOUR WINNING AND MARRYING GRENDL..." AS ALP DEPARTS TO PONDER THIS NEWS VALETA SITS BY THE FIRE, ENJOYING WHAT JEALOUSY HAS MADE HER DO.



AT BREAKFAST VALETA LAVISHES ALP WITH SHY AFFECTION. THE NIGHT BEFORE HE HAD MISTAKEN HER FOR KAREN IN THE FIRELIGHT, AND VALETA, DRIVEN BY ENVY, HAD SEIZED THE OPPORTUNITY, PLAYING KAREN'S PART AND CONFIDING THAT POOR VALETA WAS LOVESICK. THE SEED SOWN, VALETA'S CHARMS HELP IT GROW. KAREN WATCHES HELPLESSLY AS HER FRIEND ALP IS ENSNARED.



ALP DEPARTS THE INN IN A MERRY MOOD, BELIEVING ONE PRINCESS TO BE IN PURSUIT AND ANOTHER, GRENDL, THE TOURNAMENT'S PRIZE, WITHIN HIS GRASP.



DAYDREAMING, HE ACCIDENTALLY FELS A STROLLER. THEY STARE AT EACH OTHER IN BEWILDERMENT. THE RESEMBLANCE IS STRIKING "YOU LOOK.. FAMILIAR," ALP STAMMERS. THE OTHER LAD, WHEN HE FINDS HIS VOICE, YELLS UP THE STREET, "ATANAS, ATANAS,!" SUDDENLY ALP'S ARMS ARE PINNED.



"SHALL I ARREST HIM, SIRE?" THE SPEAKER IS THE TOURNAMENT JUDGE. "HANDS OFF, ATANAS," THE NOBLE YOUTH COMMANDS. AND OF ALP HE ASKS: "DID YOU EVER SEE THIS MAN BEFORE COMING TO SALONAE?" ALP NODS. AT THAT, ATANAS AND HIS MASTER MOVE OFF, ARGUING VIOLENTLY.



KAREN HAS NOT BEEN IDLE. SHE SUSPECTS HER TWIN OF FOUL PLAY. "IF VALETA ACHES FOR ALP," SHE VOWS, "THEN GRENDL'S HE SHALL BE." ONLY ONE TEAM OF CONTESTANTS STANDS BETWEEN ALP AND THE LAURELS, AND KAREN DETERMINES TO TILT THE ODDS IN ALP'S FAVOR. SHE SNEAKS TO THE INN OF THE MASKED STRANGERS. HEARING NOTHING SHE ENTERS.

JOHN CUMEN MURPHY  
2405



... AND IS CAUGHT IN MIDAIR "I RECOGNIZE YOU EVEN FROM BEHIND, KAREN," A YOUNG VOICE LAUGHS THE LAUGH IS GALAN'S.





"WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?" KAREN ASKS WHEN SHE FINDS A VOICE. "YOU WERE IN INDIA." GALAN DONS HIS MASK AND BOWS. "I EXPECT YOU HAVE SEEN ME AT THE TOURNAMENT, AND WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?" KAREN EXPLAINS ABOUT HER FRIEND ALP, AND ABOUT VALETA, AND THEN SHE POUTS: "I WANTED TO FIND A WAY TO MAKE THE MASKED STRANGERS LOSE.."



"....THEN ALP AND FATHER WOULD WIN. ALP WOULD BE GIVEN PRINCESS GRENDL'S HAND AND VALETA WOULD SULK FOR MONTHS SO MUCH FOR THAT IDEA "



SUDDENLY KAREN LAUGHS "GALAN, ARE YOU HOPING TO MARRY GRENDL YOURSELF?" HE IS ABOUT TO EXPLAIN WHEN YUAN CHEN APPEARS AND STIFLES THE BOY. "SPEECH IS HUMAN, SILENCE DIVINE. KAREN, YOU MUST TELL NO ONE OUR IDENTITIES. TOO MUCH HAPPINESS DEPENDS ON IT."



THE TOURNAMENT RESUMES ON THE MORROW AND PRINCE VALIANT EXPLORES THE STREETS OF SALONAE HE KNOWS NOTHING OF THE TWINS' FEUD OR OF ALP'S STRANGE ENCOUNTER BUT THAT CHANCE MEETING HAS SET EVENTS IN MOTION. THUS IT HAPPENS THAT VAL FINDS HIMSELF SURROUNDED.



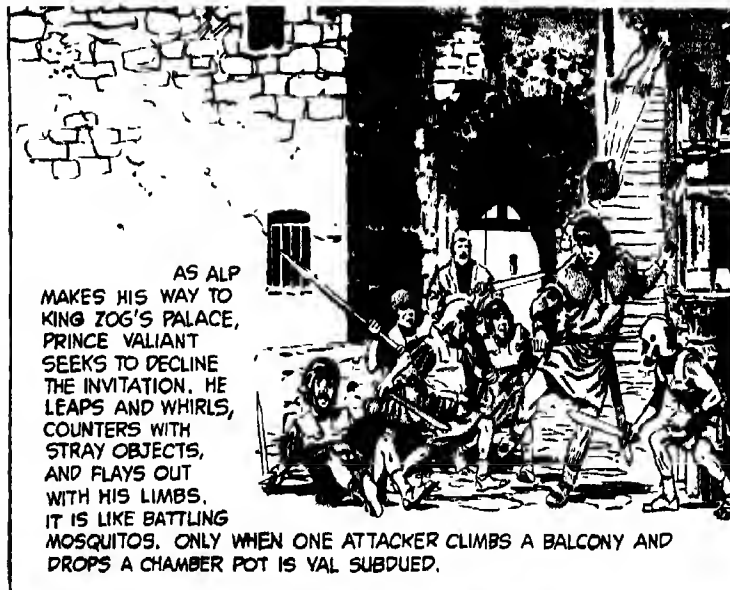
"WE WOULD BE PLEASED TO ESCORT YOU TO THE PALACE," THE TOURNAMENT JUDGE SAYS. IN REPLY, VAL UNSHEATHES THE 'SINGING SWORD' THE FIRST ATTACKER HE PARRIES WITH A KICK, WHIRLING AT ONCE TO FEND OFF A SECOND. BUT THE BLADE ARCS OVER THE SHORT FELLOW'S HEAD, AND VAL'S CALF PAYS FOR THE MISTAKE. A PRINCELY KNEE SEEKS REVENGE.

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AT THE INN, ALP RECEIVES A SUMMONS FROM KING ZOG. SUSPECTING NOTHING, HE OBEYS AT ONCE





AS ALP MAKES HIS WAY TO KING ZOG'S PALACE, PRINCE VALIANT SEEKS TO DECLINE THE INVITATION. HE LEAPS AND WHIRLS, COUNTERS WITH STRAY OBJECTS, AND PLAYS OUT WITH HIS LIMBS. IT IS LIKE BATTLING MOSQUITOS. ONLY WHEN ONE ATTACKER CLIMBS A BALCONY AND DROPS A CHAMBER POT IS VAL SUBDUED.



TAKING NO CHANCES, THEY TRUSS HIM LIKE A ROAST AND CART HIM TO THE AUGUST PRESENCE OF ZOG. IN THE THRONE ROOM THE BLINDFOLD IS REMOVED.



"ALP!" VAL CRIES. AND THEN HIS EYES WANDER TO THE OTHER FIGURE. "ALP?" THE TWO LADS ARE IDENTICAL. "SILENCE," KING ZOG COMMANDS. HIS EYES CLOSE AND HIS SPEECH BEGINS TO RAMBLE. "TWENTY YEARS AGO AS A VIOLENT STORM RAGED OUTSIDE, MY BELOVED QUEEN GAVE BIRTH TO TWINS...."



"....AND THEN GAVE UP HER SOUL. TWINS! EVER SINCE THE CIVIL WAR LONG AGO THE NOBLES OF DALMATIA HAVE FORBIDDEN THE HOUSE OF ZOG TO HAVE TWINS WHAT COULD I DO? TO SAVE MY SONS I SLAUGHTERED ALL WITNESSES. FOOLISHLY I FORGOT TO ASK WHICH BOY WAS BORN FIRST.



"I PICKED ONE AT RANDOM AND SENT HIM OFF WITH MY TRUSTY ATANAS, WHO FOUND HIM A GOOD HOME IN THE MUSTY ISLES. I PAID THE PARENTS GENEROUSLY.



"THE OTHER BOY, ULF, I RAISED AS MY SON," ZOG ROUSES FROM HIS REVERY AND SPITS INTO ALP'S FACE. "AND NOW YOU RETURN TO USURP HIS PLACE." ALP STAMMERS A DENIAL BUT ZOG HEARS NOTHING. "THE NOBLES WILL SOON KNOW ALL; MY PALACE WALLS HAVE EARS. I HAVE NO CHOICE I MUST INVOKE THE DREADED LEX GEMINORUM, AND ONE OF YOU MUST DIE"

(TO BE CONTINUED...)



WHEN Midas, King of Crete, possessed the "Golden Touch", there lived a bird in his garden who had escaped his "golden touch" and sang beautifully morning and evening.

Although so much wealth and gold surrounded him, the king's heart was heavy, for his beloved daughter had turned to a statue of gold when he had kissed her. The only things that cheered him now were the song of the bird and the sight of the stars—things he had not been able to reach.

At last, King Midas realised his folly and stupidity and was released from the curse of the "golden touch". Once again, his food tasted good; his books no longer had pages of gold leaves, the roses bloomed with soft delicate petals; and his daughter was restored alive and lovely.

So happy was the king that his heart grew kind and his wisdom great; and in his joy, he remembered the bird which had consoled him in the days of his misery, and he asked for a boon.

"May the bird which sang to me in the garden be made into a most glorious one with feathers, the colour of gold, so that people may know henceforth that a bird and a twinkling star are worth more than great riches!"

So it was that the "Golden Oriole" came and lived in the fruit trees of the

garden, and his wife wore the colours of the fresh green leaves in spring. (Local names: Hindi, Pilak; Bengali, Benebau)

The Golden Oriole sings less these days, for King Midas has been dead a long, long time, but men still remember his words when they see a Golden Oriole in the mango trees: 'that gold is worth little unless the owner has a loving heart'.

As soon as the mango tree bears fruit and it starts to ripen, you will very likely hear a musical, rich, whistling call, which has been rendered as 'Pe-lo-lo', followed by a flash of yellow wings from the mango grove. Look closely, and you will see the Golden Oriole, a bright yellow bird—a summer visitor—which comes to us in April and leaves us in October.

Orioles are entirely arboreal birds and hardly ever descend to the ground. They can often be seen in pairs flitting from tree to tree or from one branch to another, chasing each other through the foliage with a swift and undulating flight. There is not a mango grove or orchard in India without its 'quota' of Orioles, but most of them avoid deep forest. Normally, the Oriole inhabits only the foothills of the Himalayas, upto a height of 5,000 ft. It is resident in most localities, but is a lo-

cal migrant in others. This local migration has not been fully studied so far, and it is an interesting aspect for close study and observation.

Orioles subsist on a diet of berries, fruits, wild figs, and the nectar of flowers. Insects and worms are also relished. Their calls are numerous and two birds perched on neighbouring trees will keep bandying a vivacious and merry 'pin-peew, piu-pipitoo-pin' as if to prolong the all-too-short cool mornings of wilting summer days. Their whistle-like calls are easily mimicked, but the birds are seldom deceived due to their shy and suspicious temperament.

Naturalists agree that the Oriole is probably one of the best artisans and architects among birds. In fact, its nest-building goes beyond skilled crafts-

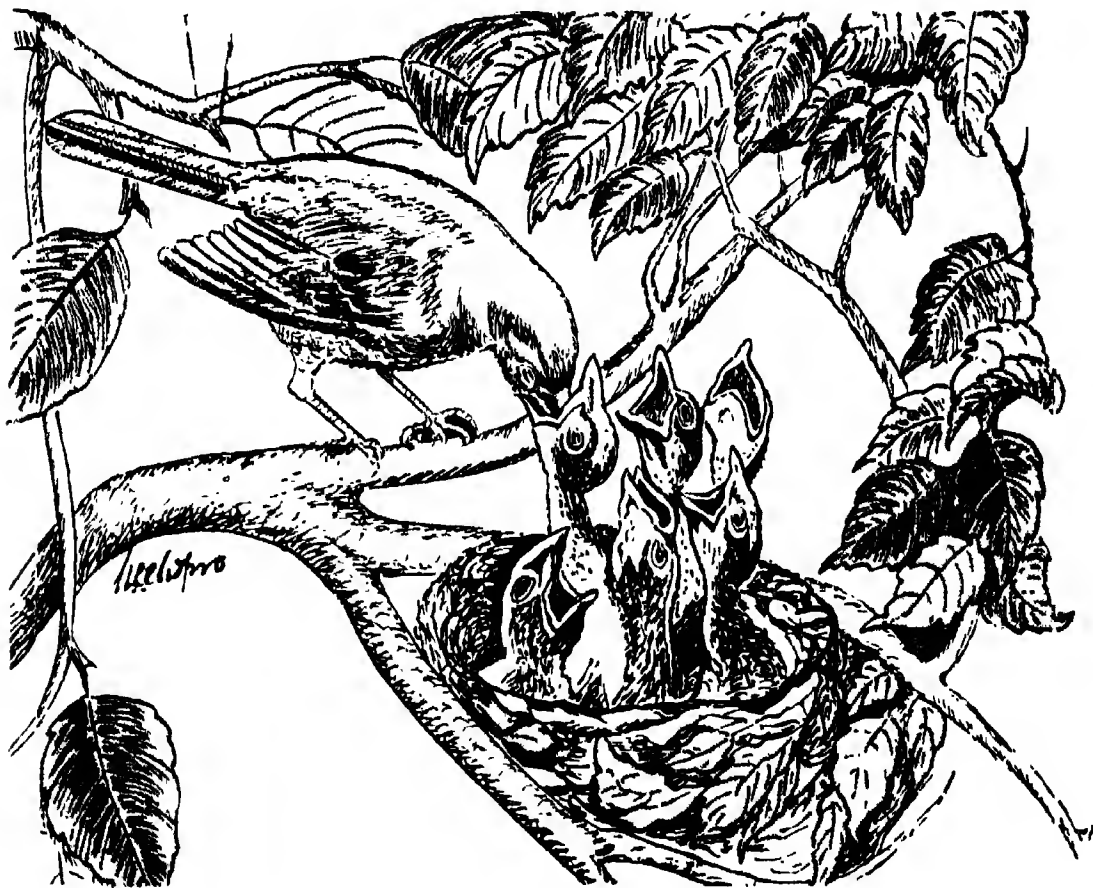
manship into the field of construction engineering!

How the bird builds or rather weaves the long, pocket-shaped nest is something amazing to see. The first strands, usually long ones, are loosely wound around a selected twig. Each additional fibre the Oriole brings to the growing nest is worked into the "fabric" by shuttle-like movements of the bill.

As the work progresses and the hanging mass of plant fibres, milkweed silk, and sometimes string, horsehair, and bits of cloth takes shape, the tempo of these shuttle movements increases greatly.

There is a record of ornithologists having counted more than a hundred of the thrust-and-draw motions made

*(Continued on page 50)*



# The Price of Love

UNDER the shade of a coconut grove on the seashore, the Portuguese traders opened boxes of merchandise brought by them from Europe before King Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. He was a young man in the prime of his life. Pleased with the merchandise, he gave with an open hand. The Portuguese, however, had their eye on bigger things and were anxious to establish a trading centre at Diu, a chance to colonise, and move into the vast hinterland. After constant failures, they had hit upon a plan.

They had with them a charming lass. Her curly, golden hair was bewitching and in her blue eyes, there was an expression of perplexity. She was the centre of attraction. Bahadur Shah was dumbstruck by her peerless beauty.

"Mary, pay your respects to the King of Gujarat, Bahadur Shah," the leader of the merchants ordered. She raised her bashful eyes and with striking grace bowed before the king.

Bahadur Shah was enamoured. "Who's this girl? Does she hold any share in the trade?" he asked.

The leader answered quite modestly, "Her father died on the ship and she has no guardian. She is quite young and in Diu, we cannot find a good match for her. We're, therefore, planning to send her back to Portugal."

Bahadur Shah maintained a strange silence. He gave some gifts to the merchants and asked them not to go away from Diu without informing him.

Bahadur Shah passed the whole night restless, thinking of the golden-haired girl. The next day, he became

a captive of the Portuguese beauty's golden hair. He bought her from the merchants.

Those were the days of Babar. The Pathan states of India were busy trying to save themselves from his clutches. The states of Bengal, Bihar and Deccan also failed to check the flood of the Mughals. Babar established a large kingdom in India. After his death, Humayun wanted to extend the boundaries of the kingdom. He was inclined to move towards Gujarat.

The Portuguese beauty served her country well and acquired many facilities from Bahadur Shah for her countrymen. Even then, their greed was only growing. They wanted complete monopoly over the trade of Gujarat.



When Cupid plays the game of love, no man, not even a king, can keep his head! Mary went on a hunger-strike for two days. Bahadur Shah was puzzled, but Mary's latest demand was soon made. 'Portuguese merchandise should not be taxed'.

Bahadur Shah was at a loss to understand how the matter of trade and taxation came into the head of a lady supposed to have only a heart for kingly love.

Bahadur Shah tried persuasion. "Mary, these are matters for the government to decide. You should not interfere in these matters. The merchants of Gujarat will revolt against this order. The government's revenue will be affected. I don't understand what you will gain by this."

With tearful eyes, Mary glanced at Bahadur Shah and said, "I am a Portuguese lady. We test our husbands with such demands. Even the tears of a lady do not affect your heart. How cruel the Indians are! Had I known this . . ." she hid her face in her hand and started sobbing.

Bahadur Shah took her in his arms. "You cannot understand my limitations!"

"I understand everything. . . You regard my community as inferior to yours. In order to keep the Portuguese away from business, your government has introduced such heavy taxes. Now I beseech you to free me. It is not possible for me to lead the life of slavery." Then she took recourse to her most effective weapon—tears.

Bahadur Shah accepted defeat. "All right, Mary, I exempt the Portuguese from taxation for one year. Now look at me, Mary. Just smile and be happy!"

Gradually, the Portuguese became more and more powerful. They were

not only exempted from taxes but were permitted to establish a trade centre at Daman. The news spread like wild fire throughout Gujarat. People became furious. The Portuguese had always looked down upon Indians. Now this incident instigated them to show greater hatred towards the inhabitants of the land.



Bahadur Shah was one of the greatest kings of Gujarat. He was sensible, intelligent, and prudent, but under the spell of love, he forgot the conditions prevailing in his dominion. When a deputation of traders went to see him, the Portuguese lady once again misguided him.

Suddenly, Bahadur Shah got the news of an impending invasion by Humayun. He awoke from his dream of pleasure. But it was too late. Hatred of the Portuguese had created many traitors in the country. All the nobles

of Gujarat joined Humayun. The army was disloyal and the soldiers had become treacherous. He was sure to be defeated.

Humayun pursued Bahadur Shah, who had fled to Cambay. He followed him there but arrived at the port on the day Bahadur Shah took a ship for Diu. Humayun besieged the fortress. The victory encouraged him to distribute the fields of Gujarat among his officers, as though the conquest was complete and permanent. The kingdom assumed, for a short time, the appearance of a settled province of the Mughal empire.

The lady for whom Bahadur Shah had staked his kingdom was with him. At Diu, she looked scornfully at Bahadur Shah and said, "Bahadur Shah,

if you remember, one day you had expressed great hatred for the Portuguese."

Mary laughed heartily and said, "We know how to trade. I feel that by presenting Bahadur Shah's head to Humayun, we can fetch enormous wealth. What is your opinion, O king of Gujarat?"

At that very moment, some Portuguese men with naked swords in hand entered the room. Mary asked smilingly. "What is your last wish, Bahadur Shah?"

Bahadur Shah repented. "If my countrymen can hear me, they should expel the treacherous Portuguese from this pious land."

Those were his last words.

Shamsuddin

*(Continued from page 20)*

It was always a busy road until late into the evening. Then the traffic began to trickle. By midnight, except for the passing of a stray cyclist or motorist, the road was quiet.

Nothing went up or down it now. It was so peaceful. . . .

A sudden noise jarred upon the ear. It was a scooter somewhere down the road. It sputtered and screamed. Another voice of the night? It was rather a voice in the night, like that of a loud intruder in a tranquil lane.

There was some more sputtering. It was louder and harsher. If it went on for some more time, the entire locality might be roused. But the next second it trailed off. And then it stopped altogether.

And in the quiet the voice of the night came again. Near me was the patter of the rain. In the trees was the

rustling of the wind. And from the distance came the croaking of the frogs, distilled.

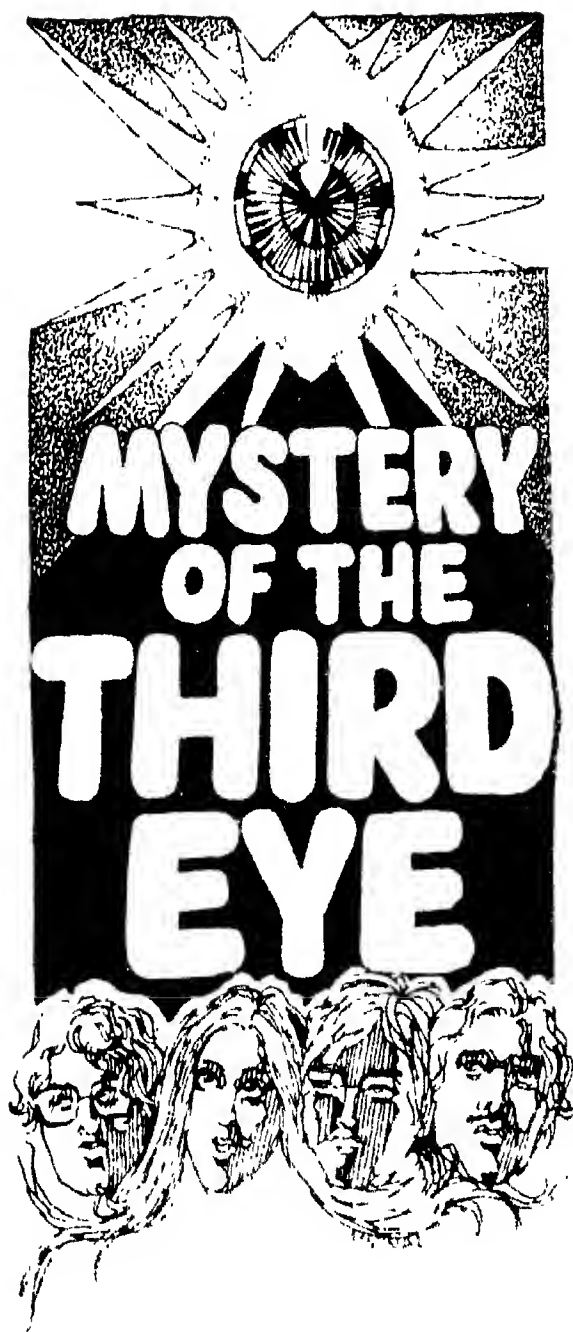
O. P. Bhagat

*(Continued from page 19)*

end of the strap. The strap is also made of webbing and its top end is secured to a 'strong point' in the aircraft. The length of the static line is 12 feet 6 inches. The strap has to be long enough to ensure that the parachute will be well below the aircraft before it opens, and short enough so that the chute is not caught in the slip stream and twisted round the rear plane or the tail wheel. In a dakota the strap is attached to a steel cable running along the side of the aircraft. The strap attachment is clipped to this cable and moves with the jumpers as they shuffle one by one towards the exit.

Mukesh Chopra

*(To be continued)*



### THE STORY SO FAR

Minoo, Ravi, Jacob and Sonia are driving back from Khandala when Minoo's bike is hit by a cream coloured foreign-made car.

Minoo and his pillion rider, Ravi, are sent flying into the air. Minoo lands safely on the road but Ravi is catapulted towards the edge of the cliff. Jacob and Sonia find him

hanging precariously onto a bush eight feet below. With the help of another person they manage to pull him up. Soon Ravi begins to feel better and they continue their journey to the farm house. On the way they spot the same car parked outside a restaurant. Jacob is tempted to settle scores with them but Ravi does not allow him to. As luck would have it the same people come to the farmhouse where Ravi, Minoo, Jacob and Sonia are staying. The two men are hippies. One of them is a Nepali with a Ghengiz Khan moustache. The other has an 'Ankh,' the Egyptian symbol of eternity on a thick chain round his neck.

The two hippies pick up a quarrel with them. Sonia knows Karate, so she knocks one of them down. The hippies hurry back to their car and drive off.

Much later while listening to the news on radio they discover a big theft has taken place in Bombay. A gem from a Tibetan idol has been stolen. Jacob's elder brother, Morris, is an inspector in the Bombay C.I.D. Jacob is sure he would be on the case. Ravi, Minoo, Sonia and Jacob decide to go to Bombay the next day and investigate.

### II. ENCOUNTER WITH A LAMA

EARLY next morning, the Tigers set out for Bombay. Minoo's uncle and aunt saw them off, making them promise to come again soon. They bumped their way down the driveway that wound between the mango trees. Sonia looked back for a last glimpse at the pretty stonehouse with its tiled roof and waved to the two figures standing there.

"Stop fidgeting!" Jacob grumbled. "Do you have to keep turning round?"

"Yes! Because, if you take a last backward look at a place you are leaving, you are sure to return!" explained Sonia.

"You girls! Always superstitious!"

Soon, they had passed Panvel and were on their way towards Chembur and the new bridge connecting the island of Bombay to the mainland. Sonia was fascinated with everything. It was all so different from her well-laid out city of Chandigarh.

They went to Minoo's house on Hughes Road first, then to the Merchants' on Marine Drive. Finally, they landed up at Jacob's house on the first floor of an old building at Colaba.

"Hey, Morris!" Jacob called to his elder brother, who was rushing out. "Where're you off to in such a hurry on a Sunday?"

"Sunday or not, I'm busy. Robbery of an emerald from a statue. I'm on the case!"

"Hey, terrific! Tell us more about it!" exclaimed Ravi.

"Police business has nothing to do with you, kids! Heard me? So, don't go snooping around, I'm warning you!" Morris cautioned as he eased his tall form into the police jeep that cannoned around the corner to pick him up. "Bye!" he waved a salute.

"JACOB!" called his mother, a fat grey-haired woman with a cheerful face. "What do you mean by returning a day late? You were to be here by the Sabbath! That was yesterday! You missed going to the Synagogue!"

"Oh Ma, you know I'm not so particular about these things as you and Dad are!" Jacob said nonchalantly.

His mother chuckled, shaking all over. "It's your Dad who insists on these things, son, it's your Dad! But I know my sons!" She chuckled again. "Hi, children! Did you have a nice time? Come and have hot tea and biscuits!" She held out a plate.

"Thanks, but we had breakfast be-

fore we left Karjat," Minoo refused politely.

"How do you think I became so healthy? By eating! Look at yourselves, you skinny lot! Have another breakfast!" Mrs. Cohen advised, laughing.

So they did.

Later that morning, the Tigers went along to the place where the theft had taken place. It was a lovely old stone building.

"There's a policeman on duty outside," Sonia pointed out.

Jacob sauntered up to him and asked him where Inspector Cohen was.

"Why? What business have you with him?" the havaladar demanded.

"I'm his brother, and I want to see him. I have a message for him!" Jacob insisted.

"I've an idea," Sonia whispered to Ravi. "Let's create a diversion. Then whilst the policeman comes to investigate, Jacob and Minoo can slip inside."

"Right!" agreed Ravi. The Tigers went into a huddle, and then Ravi and Sonia walked in the direction of the bikes.

"Ravi, I want to ride one of the bikes!" cried Sonia loudly. "Why won't you all let me?"

"Because girls don't have enough strength to control a bike!"

"I like that!" Sonia swung a long leg over one of the machines. "I've seen many women riding motorbikes in Bombay!"

"Sonia, get off!" cried Ravi, and in the resulting tug of war the bike fell over.

"Now look what you've done!" cried the girl. "Thank goodness, I managed to get my leg free in time! I could have been hurt!"

Meanwhile Jacob and Minoo had



disappeared round a nearby corner, waiting for a signal. And it came.

"Havaladar!" Ravi called loudly. "Can you help me lift up the bike?"

Grumbling, the policeman strolled over, and the other two boys took the opportunity to slip inside the unguarded entrance.

The hall was very large, and right then was full of policemen and officials. Jacob and Minoo easily found the statue in question. It was not very large. About two feet high. The face was serene. Hands folded in its lap. Legs crossed. In the middle of its forehead, between the eyebrows was—A GAP-ING HOLE!

"Wow! Just look at that!" exclaimed Minoo, chewing on his lower lip. "The emerald must be quite a size!"

"As large as a marble!" Jacob guessed. His gaze darted eagerly around, taking in everything.

A Tibetan official was busy talking to Inspector Cohen, amongst others.

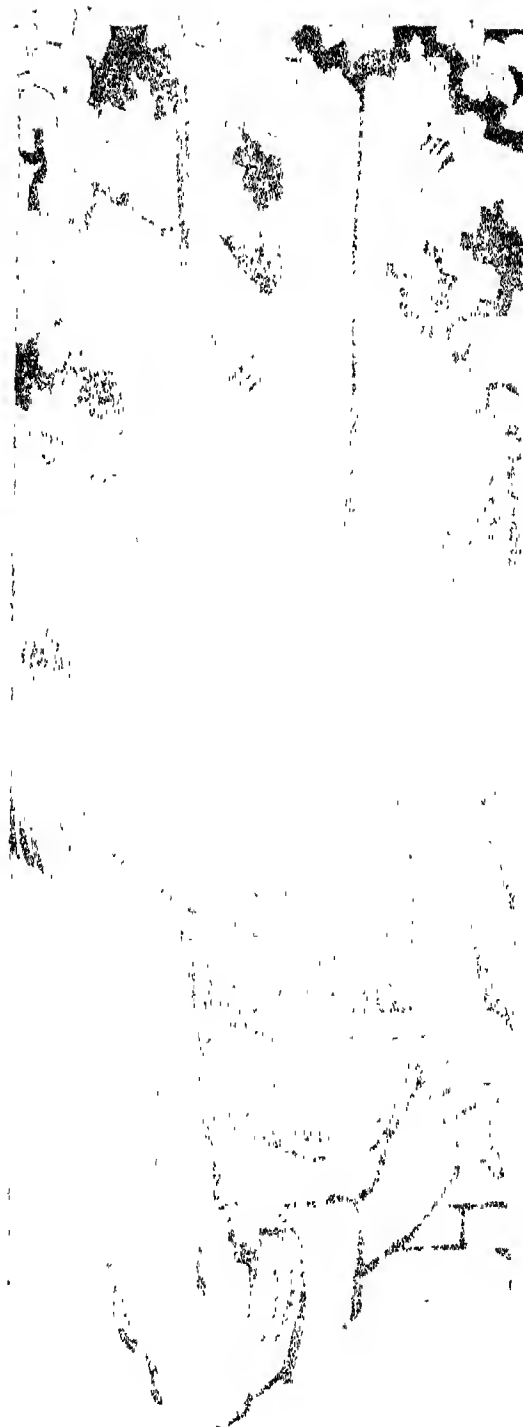
"When the Dalai Lama with his group of lamas and Tibetan refugees left Lhasa to seek refuge in India," the little man was telling so excitedly, "they brought this precious idol with them." He was gesticulating as he talked. "It is hundreds of years old and the emerald, the stolen, missing emerald, is its Third Eye. We in Tibet believe in the Third Eye."

"We are doing our best to recover it, Mr. Dorje!" That was Inspector Cohen.

"It is held in great veneration by us Tibetans! Great veneration! Now, what are we going to do?" He took off his glasses and mopped his perspiring round face with a handkerchief, his hand shaking with emotion. "Your government persuaded us to exhibit this priceless idol against our better

judgement! It was difficult for us to refuse!"

"It's all right, sir. We will recover the emerald. Just give us some more details about . . . Hey! You boys!" Inspector Cohen spotted Jacob and Minoo. "Who let you in here?" He strode



over to them. "You have no business to be here! Leave at once!"

"Take it easy, Morris! We only wanted to see the idol..." Jacob was interrupted by a firm hand propelling him to the door. Minoo trailed after him.

"OUT! OUT!" thundered the already harassed Inspector.

Sonia and Ravi were sitting near the bikes. The havaladar looked up in surprise when he saw the boys emerging from the hall.

"Now what?" Minoo sounded crestfallen. "I guess we'll just have to..."

He was cut off by Sonia. "Look!" she hissed, grabbing his arm. "Look at that man! He's very familiar!"

They all turned and looked at the dapper figure standing outside the gates. He had short, golden hair, and was dressed in a brown suit. In his hand he carried a cane. On his head was, of all things, a felt hat. The perfect gentleman.

"Yes," Jacob murmured, rubbing his chin thoughtfully, "we have seen him somewhere... Oh, he's walking away! I think he has noticed us watching him. Let's follow him at a distance on our bikes. Right now everyone is suspect in my books!"

The man led them down Colaba Causeway, and then turned into one of the side lanes. Just then, the traffic lights turned red.

"Dash it!" muttered Jacob. "We'll lose him now!"

Five minutes later they got the green signal and turned into the side street. No sign of the man.

"Let's park our bikes and look around," suggested Minoo. "Look, there's that hotel where all the hippies usually stay."

"I can see quite a few Arabs as well!"

Sonia remarked, looking up at the balconies.

Suddenly, her gaze fell upon a Tibetan monk or lama. He was seated beneath a tree on the pavement. He had a perfectly calm impassive face and wide open eyes—their gaze fixed on some invisible far-distant object somewhere up in space. He was wearing monastic garments, a saffron robe which he had wound round his body. In front of him, on the ground, was an empty bowl, with neither a saucer nor a cover. He had a Prayer Wheel which he was turning with a regular click-click. And he softly droned "Om! Mani padmi hum! Mani padmi hum!" His voice was hypnotic. Sonia was fascinated. Just for a moment the lama turned his head ever so slightly and his eyes bored into hers. She felt a shiver tingle down her spine.

"That Tibetan monk!" she whispered to Jacob. For some reason she felt shaken. "I don't like him..."

"Oh be quiet, Sonia!" Ravi interrupted. "You're not going to start on this sixth sense business again, are you?"

They wandered down the road, pretending to look into the shop windows. Sonia was uncomfortably conscious of the monk's gaze boring into her back. Or was it her imagination? Whenever she glanced his way, he seemed to be gazing straight ahead into space, intoning.

Suddenly. "Freeze!" hissed Jacob. For there, reflected in the glass of the shop window they were looking into were the The Ankh and the Nepali coming out of the hotel opposite. "Duck into this doorway or they'll see us!"

From their hiding place they watched the hippies. Thapa had something in his hand and was showing it to The

Ankh. He was talking excitedly, and the Ankh was silent.

Suddenly, two men erupted from a nearby Irani Cafe and attacked them. In a matter of minutes, the unprepared hippies were half lying on the ground, and the miscreants ran off.

"Gosh, a crowd is gathering! Let's join it! We won't be noticed!" said Jacob.

They slipped across the road and stood on the fringe of the gathering.

"He stole something from me," the Nepali spat out, dark eyes flashing dangerously. The Ankh stood up silently, turned around, and clipped the Nepali across the head.

"What's that all about?" murmured Minoo.

"Who were the other men?" Jacob asked one of the crowd. "What has happened?" He bent and picked up something that fell out of Thapa's pocket without his realising it. A KEY! Jacob slipped it into his pocket.

"One of them was Ahmed Khan, a dealer from Chor Bazar," said a man standing nearby.

"But why did they attack these two?"

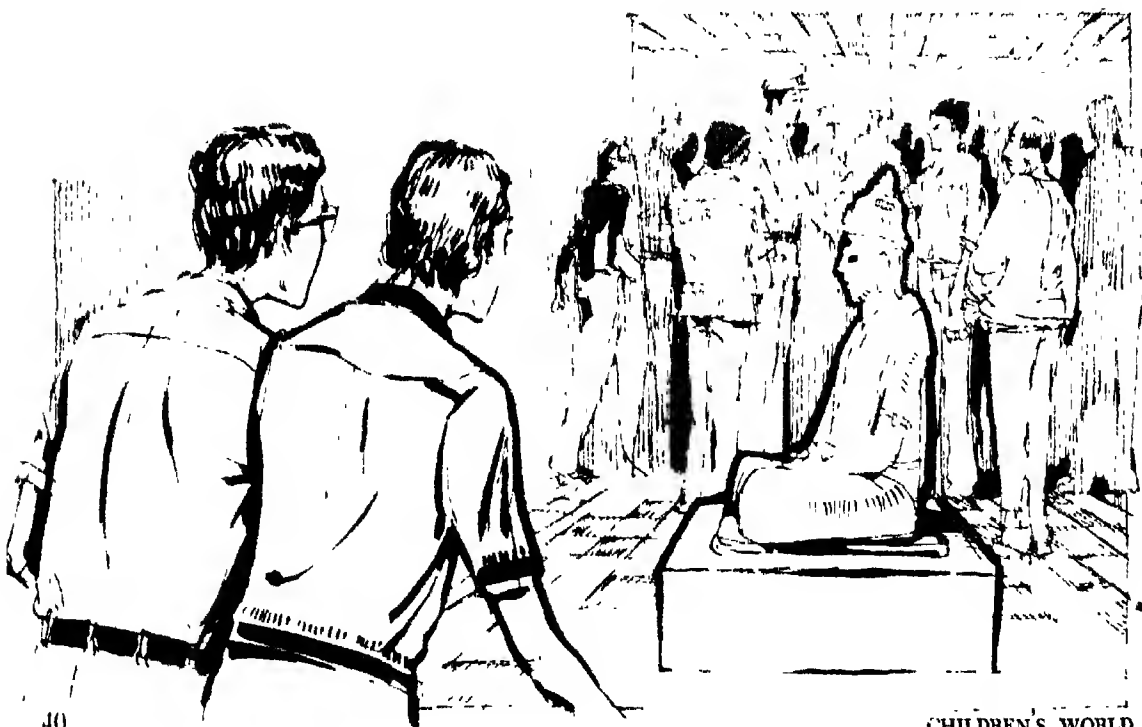
"Now, how would I know?" the man sounded irritated. "They must have had something that he wanted. Such things are always happening here!"

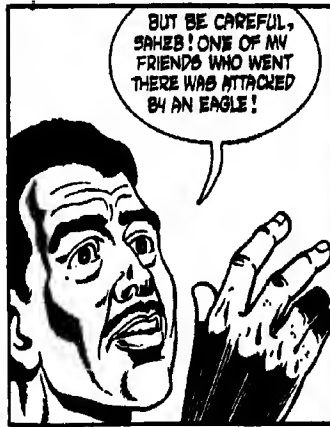
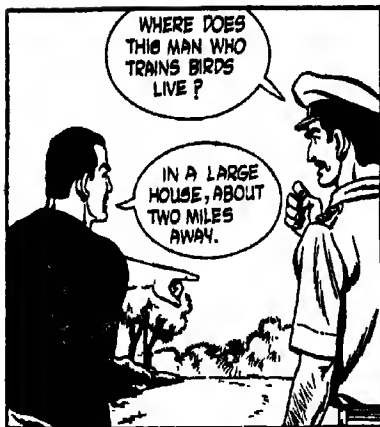
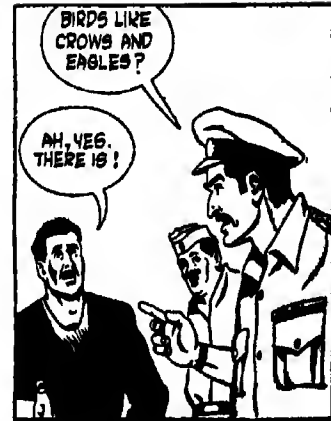
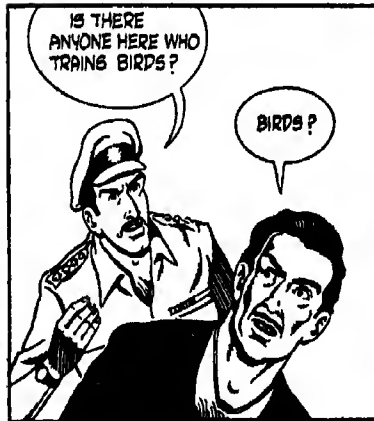
Meanwhile, Souia was watching the Tibetan lama out of the corner of her eye. He seemed most interested in what was going on, and his Prayer Wheel was silent! She didn't care what the others said; her senses told her there was something odd about him that made her feel uneasy. His eyes were gleaming strangely. Suddenly, he looked up and, finding Souia's eye on him, resumed his click-click, and intonations.

"I say!" Jacob hissed excitedly. "Let's go to Minoo's house and discuss all this. Something funny seems to be going on. The gentleman we followed from the hall looks a bit like The Ankh! Maybe they're related. And he did disappear in this direction. Come on, Tigers, we've lots to discuss!"

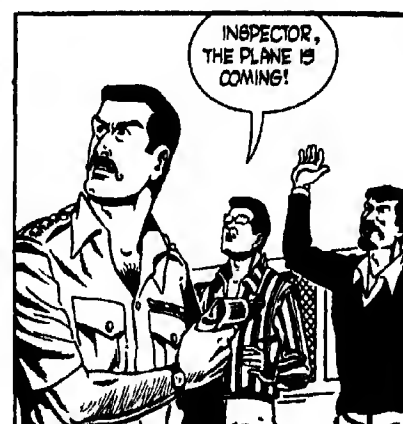
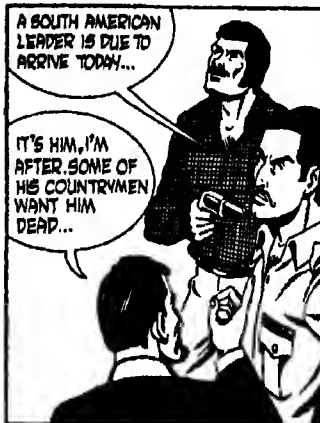
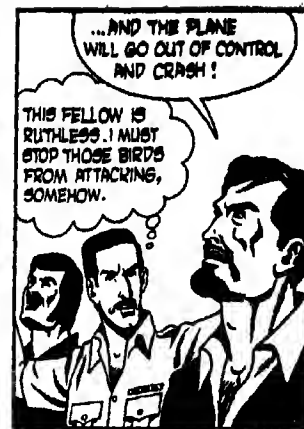
Kamala Ramchandani

(To be continued)

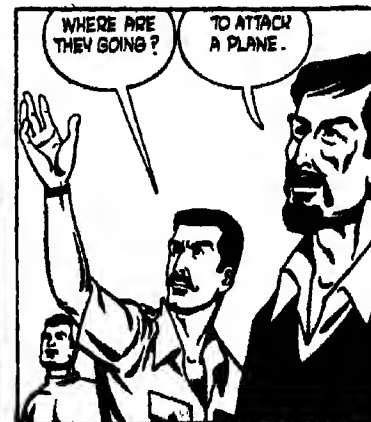
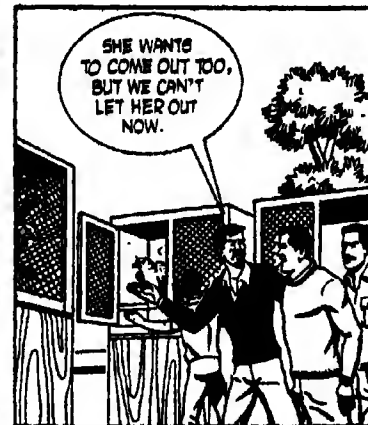
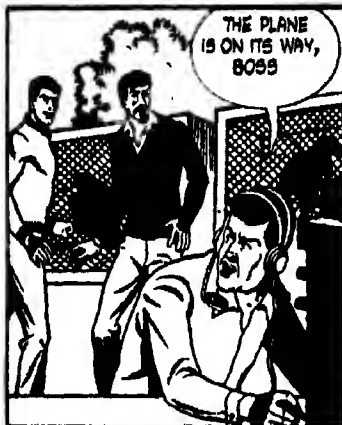
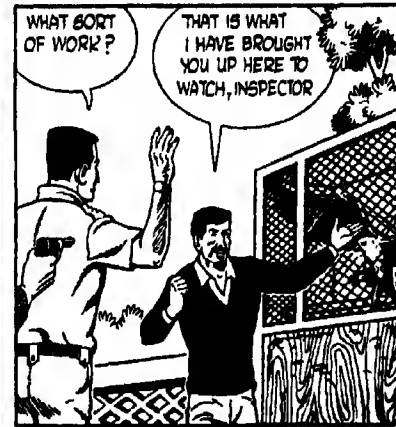
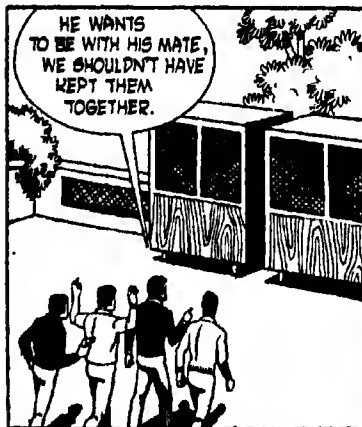
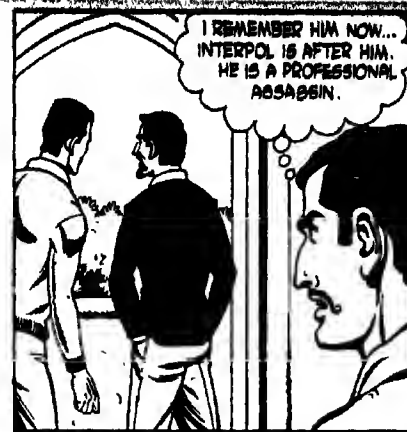


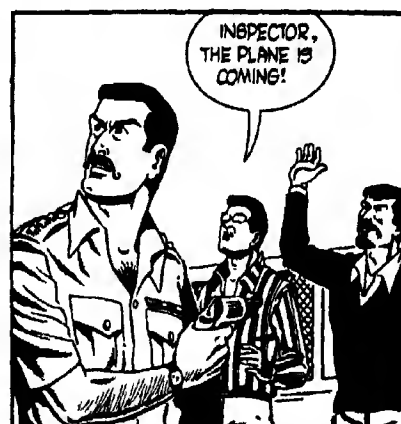
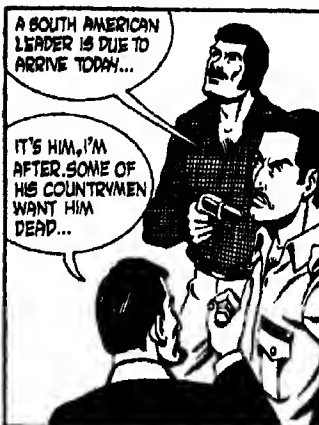
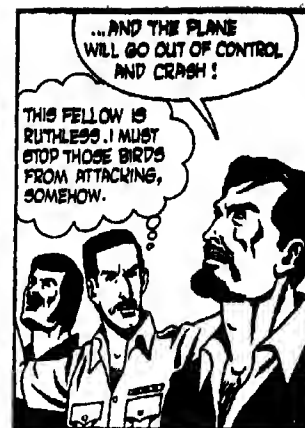
















## PICTUREWORD

1	2	3	4
5			
	6		
7			8
9		10	
11			12
13			

**2a**

**5a**

**6a**

**7a**

**10a**

**1d**

**3d**

**4d**

**6d**

**11a**

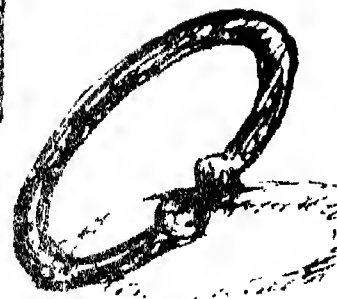
**13a**

**9d**

**8d**

(Solution next month)  
(First Features)

# THE CULPRIT



**M**OHAN was the only son of rich parents. They gave him whatever he asked for. They never scolded him or punished him. And he grew up to be a spoilt child. But they adored him. At heart, Mohan was a good boy. He loved his parents dearly.

When he began going to school, he made friends easily. He shared his toys and food with them. His parents gave him plenty of sweets and these he shared with his friends. They always surrounded him.

One day, Mohan fell ill. He was taken to the nearby hospital. The doctor examined him and said, "He is all right, but his stomach is ill. He has a lot of worms. We must get rid of them."

Mohan's parents were worried no end. But in three days the boy had recovered, and they took him home.

"Remember," said the doctor to Mohan's father, "sweets are his enemy. Don't give him too many."

Mohan's parents followed the doctor's advice, and poor Mohan had to go without sweets. It was very hard for him. He begged, he cried, he went into a rage, but for once his parents did not give in. They were scared. "No, son," they consoled him, "no sweets. Or else you'll have to go to hospital again, and they will pump your

stomach and will keep you there for a long time. No sweets.

Mohan saw that his parents were determined. He tried to forget the wonderful taste of sweets. And he would have forgotten, too. But there were those friends of his. He used to give them sweets. Now they were disappointed and angry. They made fun of his parents. "Your father is a miser," said Bhushan, who was supposed to be his dearest friend and constant companion. "What's wrong with sweets? All of us eat a lot of them, and nothing goes wrong with us. Your father only wants to save money."

Mohan tried to defend his father. By and by, he began to think, Bhushan might be right. The other boys soon left his company, though Bhushan was still with him. And the two wondered how they could have sweets again. They had no money. At last, Bhushan had a plan. "Why not make some money?" And he told him how.

Mohan hesitated, but Bhushan said, "Your father is rich. He won't know."

And so Mohan learnt to steal.

It was easy. His father usually hung his coat on the hanger. It was there till he went out the next day. And there were always a lot of small coins in the pockets. He never counted them. Even

if he counted, he would not know Mohan had taken some, for his mother too, always took out coins from his father's pockets to pay for small things. Mohan first took a 25-paise coin and kept it in his shirt pocket. Then a 50-paise coin. Then two or three coins. And he handed them all to Bhushan to buy sweets, and they had their fill, and it was very nice. It soon became a habit, and though Mohan was unhappy at first, he began not to think of it later.

Bhushan too came from a good family, but they were poor. He could not steal any money, but he was full of ideas.

Once Mohan brought a two-rupee note, and the two boys cut their classes and went for a movie. They liked it more than the sweets. By and by, Mohan began to steal bigger amounts and they went to cinema often or ate whatever sweets they wanted.

Then Bhushan had another idea. Why not cut classes for a whole day? They could go to the nearby town. See a movie. Eat what they wanted. Return by the time the school was over. Go home. No one would know.

It was a great idea. But where was the money? Bhushan suggested, "Can you bring your little sister's bangle? We will sell it."

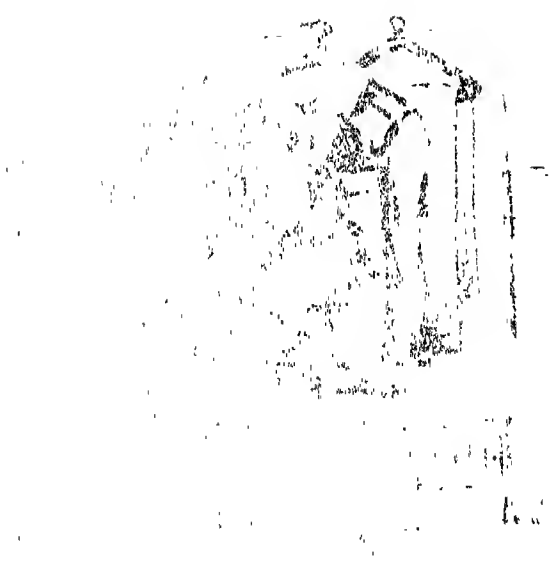
Mohan's sister was just two years old. The parents were very fond of her and gave her gold bangles, anklets, rings, earrings. Mohan went pale. "No!" he shouted, "I can't do that!"

Whatever Bhushan said, Mohan was firm. So, he said, "All right, chicken-heart. I'll do it. Take me to your house."

"What for?"

"As your friend. As your guest."

Still Mohan was not happy, but after long arguments he agreed. One evening



he took Bhushan to his house. "Mother, this is Bhushan, my best friend."

She welcomed him, and asked him about his parents. She knew them and was very happy. "Do come, often, Bhushan," she said, "you're like my own son."

The boys wandered about. Then Bhushan began to play with the baby girl. He managed to slip off her bangle without the little one knowing it and left before Mohan's father came home. He called Mohan out and whispered, "Look, I've got it!"

"How much will we get?" asked Mohan.

"Why, it's gold. Ten rupees . . . may be twenty," Bhushan guessed, ignorant of the price of gold. They agreed to go to the town the next day.

That evening Mohan's parents found the baby's bangle missing. They thought the bangle might have slipped off the baby's arm, as it was a little loose on her. They searched all over the place. The bangle could not be found.



Mohan could not sleep that night. His mother's unhappy, worried face came to his mind. He felt guilty and restless. But the deed was done, so what could he do now?

And then he overheard his parents talking.

"But how can you say that?" his father was asking. "The boy comes of good parents. I know them. No, their son won't steal."

"I, too, know them," his mother said slowly. "The boy also looked decent. But where else can the bangle go? I saw him playing with the baby for a long time."

"Perhaps it slipped off when he took her out?"

"I thought so, too," replied Mohan's mother. "I searched outside the gate as

well. No, I'm sure, the boy stole it. How horrible!" she added.

"What do we do now?" wondered Mohan's father. There was a long silence. And then he said, "We'll go and tell his parents."

"Oh, god, no!" his mother shouted. "It'll break their hearts to know that their son is a thief. I'd rather that we bear the loss. If we tell them, his mother will go mad!"

"But we must tell them, or else the boy will again steal, and it might be worse."

Now Mohan heard his mother sobbing. "Look here," she said amidst sobs, "suppose our precious darling did it..."

"Mohan? He won't!" His father shouted angrily. "What an idea!"

"He won't, I know, the little dear," said his mother. "What I mean is, suppose he did, and someone were to come and tell us that he is a thief, won't it break our hearts? Is it not the same with them? Why should we give them so much pain?"

The conversation went on, but Mohan did not hear a word. He was full of remorse and grief.

Early next morning, Mohan went out and returned in an hour. His father was about to go to his office.

He put the gold bangle in his

mother's hands without a word. When both father and mother began to ask questions, happy as well as perplexed, Mohan burst out crying and ran away.

His father and mother looked at each other.

"I think he overheard our conversation and went and got it from Bhushan," Mohan's father said, very proud of his son.

And they had every right to be. From that day, not a single paisa went from his father's coat pocket into his.

M.C. Menon

*(Continued from page 32)*

on a single visit to the nest. It takes two to three days before one side of the nest is completed. Many long strands of the plant fibres dangle at the ends.

At this point, the birds begin work from what will be the inside of the nest. At each visit to the nest, she—it is the female who is the designer and construction engineer here—not only weaves in new strands but also gathers up many others still hanging free. More twigs are used to support the other side of the nest; more weaving with the typical random stitching motions of her beak follows.

Finally, a soft lining of hair, wool or fine grasses is moulded to shape. The Oriole settles down in the nest and shakes all over in order to bring the pressure of her breast to bear down on the nest's inner surface. Such a sturdy, deep cup-shaped nest, some twenty to thirty feet above the ground in an inaccessible place, invariably suspended from a fork in the outermost branches of a large shady tree, will outlast many wind and rain-storms, and will yet

probably be "home" for the Oriole family for several weeks.

The breeding season extends from April to August upto the ripening of the first mangoes. Most of the eggs are laid in July and early August, and the clutch, usually consisting of three to four white eggs, splotted with a reddish brown, is jealously guarded from the crow and other marauders.

When the young ones hatch out, after the incubation period of fifteen days, a regular relay service is held. The female Oriole looks after the chicks, while the male goes in search of food. He brings tiny insects as food and offers these to the female, who then transfers the same to the chicks.

The chicks are born blind and are sparsely covered with straggly whitish down. Their first cheep is heard about the seventh day and their eyes open fully on the tenth day. Both the parent birds take their responsibilities very seriously till the youngsters are able to fly and fend for themselves.

U.C. Chopra



## ABOUT HORSES-6

**B**Y now, I am sure that all of you are really impatient to get on to the horse and gallop away like you see in the Western movies. But riding is not so easy as it seems. First you have to learn how to mount and dismount in the correct manner.

*Mounting* — Take down the stirrup irons to a suitable length. Take both reins into the left hand, as shown in the picture. You have to prevent the horse from moving forward, by giving him little rein only. Place the left hand forward of the withers and take the stirrup iron in your right hand. Place your left foot in the stirrup and press your toe down. Turn your body to face the horse and spring up gently. Swing the right leg over the horse's quarters, and sit down quietly. **DO NOT FAIL ON TO THE SADDLE** — this will definitely irritate your pony, even before you start riding. Place the right foot into the stirrup and take the reins. Be as still as you can, adjust stirrups before moving off.

*Dismounting* — Take the reins in your left hand — move forward and touch the horse's neck. Remove both feet from the stirrups. Place your right hand on the arch of the saddle, and spring off — swinging your right leg clear off the horse's back. Land gently on the ground — facing the direction in which the horse is looking forward. Run up your

stirrups and loosen the girth — allow the horse to rest a while before giving it water and a few carrots or a sugar cube.

Sumitra Senapaty

# When Children Become Heroes

## **INDIA'S YOUNG HEROES**

**By Sigrun Srivastava**

**National Book Trust, New Delhi**

**Rs. 2.50**

SIX young children. Six tales of extraordinary courage. You must have already read about similar children in 'Children's World', like Kurpati (The Pursuit) in the September issue.

It is not easy to be heroic. We have been brought up so much on film courage that we somehow feel it would be simple enough to act quickly in an emergency and then carry the laurels all our lives. But courage is both thinking and action. Can we recognise an emergency? And when we have done that, can we move our legs and hands before fear paralyses them?

Sigrun Srivastava has very skillfully brought these heroes and their tales close to us. It is not as if such heroism makes them remote and unrecognisable — we see them as ordinary, everyday children. Govindan the school boy, Sonna the little school girl, Satish the cow-herd, are all familiar people. And the accidents that made them heroes are also, unfortunately, familiar. Sonna was caught in a fire when the gas cylinder in the kitchen exploded. Govindan saved a blind beggar from being run over by a fast lorry. Satish lost his right eye when he faced dacoits trying to rampage the village.

Such stories! Sigrun Srivastava has told them so well that these horrifying events may well have happened to us. We feel the fear, we see the water rising just the way Felicitas must have seen it, we share with

Shatrughna the horror of the moment when nobody answers him in the dark night, we can feel the coils of the python around us as Nirmala screams.

When we wish people well, we hope that nothing tragic should ever happen to them. But, for these six children, the tragedy that struck them brought out the tremendous strength and courage that had till then lain inactive within them. Let us pray again—and this time not so much for a safe life as for courage—to face whatever happens to us.

## **SHIVAJI**

**By Sethumadhavarao S. Pagadi**

**National Book Trust, New Delhi**

**Rs. 9.00**

ANOTHER legend of courage. Another hero. This time it is Shivaji, the great Maratha who defied the Mughals and inspired all those who dared to follow him.

Shivaji's life of fifty years was crowded with drama, battles, plotting, resourcefulness, with great bravery. Just think of those days, 1630-1680, and what India must have been like three hundred years ago. Vast jungles difficult to cross, letters that took months to arrive, journeys that were difficult, hazardous, and treacherous. Shivaji, for instance, escaped from Agra where he was virtually kept prisoner by the Mughal Emperor, presumably on August 17, 1666. The next confirmed report of his having reached the Deccan was on November 20, 1666. Three months for a journey that now takes

less than three hours by air and perhaps less than two days by train!

Unfortunately, all the excitement of living in those days is not conveyed by the author at all. One can only imagine it. The author keeps to a very dry, factual style, which maintains its accuracy intact but loses out on the dramatic and the exciting.

Shivaji, himself emerges out of this cluster of dates and events with startling warmth. That must be due to the man himself—after three centuries, we can again feel his generosity, his cleverness, and his incredible valour.

Translated into our language, Shivaji would be that small, brave boy who defies the class bully and earns our admiration. Perhaps the book would inspire you, too—to fight the injustices in the world determinedly and with courage.

Poile

**CHILDREN'S KNOWLEDGE BANK**  
**Vol. II**  
**Pustak Mahal, Delhi**  
**Rs. 20**

THE trouble about questions is that not many people ask the same questions. For instance, you may ask, "Why does rain come down, instead of go up?" And I may ask, "Why is there thunder when it rains?" And your friend may look puzzled and say, "But *what* is rain?"

Well, this book helps you with answers to most of your questions. There are answers to questions on sports and sportsmen: "Why was Dhyan Chand called the Hockey Wizard?" "When did people start playing cards?" "How does the wind blow?" Biology: "Can some fish live without water?" "What are mammals?" The human body: "How does a body remain warm?" General Knowledge: "How are icebergs formed?"

It is a fairly large area that is covered — a large area of questioning — and this volume, along with the earlier volume (see *Children's World*, November 1982) would, I am sure, be of great help to you. The first volume is also available in Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, Gujarati, Tamil, Kannada, and Telugu.

There are, however, two questions that the publishers will have to answer! One: for which age group has the book been written? You see, there are very pretty questions that are usually asked by six, seven, eight-year-olds. "Why do elephants have trunks?" "What is fire?" But with these, there are also extremely grown-up questions, like "What is dialysis?" "What is infra-red radiation?" Questions that need very grown-up answers!

Two, why has the English language been so badly treated? Whatever the age group of the reader be, he has the right to expect correct usage of language. Some questions are bad enough. "How is bat different from birds?" "Why do women have sweet voice?" Some answers are worse: "There are some animals which have a very long life, while some other live only for a few years. However, many stories about the longevity of animals are in circulation which do not present the truth (p. 151). And "Normally people breathe through nose. But some people's nose remain blocked due to some reason. And thus they breathe through mouth." (p. 94)

I hope, the editors will take greater care.

**POEMS**  
**By Subramania Bharati**  
**NCERT, New Delhi**  
**Rs. 9.90**

A BOOK to treasure. Subramania Bharati may have lived and written more than sixty years ago, but his thoughts, his words, his attitudes are ours. Some of you may wonder at his name. Surely, 'Bharati' is used



for a girl. But in this case, the name too has a story. When Subramania (born as an Aiyar) was eleven, he was honoured with the title 'Bharati', because he was so good and quick at composing poems. Bharati, as you know, is another name for Saraswati, the goddess of Learning.

A book to treasure. Bharati's poems are not merely read, they are sung. As you read each poem, you will find yourself humming perhaps, or even singing aloud. Bharati uses every sound in the Tamil language to great effect. His drums do drum, his dancers do dance, his lyrics sing. And then you will realise that Tamil, like all our Indian languages, has the capacity to move you. Either to dance. Or sometimes to move you close to tears.

A book to treasure. Bharati writes of his beloved motherland. More than that, he writes of his beloved countrymen. (pgs 14-21). He speaks with pride of all that we can do as Indians.

"Both scriptures and sciences we shall learn/the heavens and oceans we will explore/the mysteries of moon we shall unravel/the art of street sweeping too, we shall learn — (pg 29)

A book to treasure. When Bharati is not rousing us, he is being tender, gentle. His poems to Kannan and Kannamma bring out the softness and quietness of the Tamil language (pgs 71-87).

A book to treasure. The translations help you to understand the poems; they tell you of the range and energy in Bharati's poems. But I also hope the translations take you back to the original poems (either in the Tamil or the Roman script that the book provides). Bharati wrote for all of us. The fact that he wrote in Tamil should not be a barrier to any one of us.

**Ambika Sengupta**

**THE COSMIC GIFT**  
By Mohan Sundara Rajan  
National Book Trust, New Delhi  
Rs. 2.50

**T**O COMMUNICATE with an alien civilization, if there is any in the vast universe, has been the goal of several scientists in the last few decades. But, to date, all such efforts have proved to be a failure. Messages have been sent on radio waves to various star systems, and it is felt that a "Hello" to our message can come any moment now, provided *there are* alien civilizations somewhere around the star systems.

This is the context in which the Science Fiction under review has been written. In the book, however, a peculiar message reaches the mankind not through radio waves but a meteorite, a massive body drifting in space, which sometimes comes in the path of earth and so falls on her surface. On examination of the meteorite, a new type of amino acid is found. As the meteorite shows signs of being sent by an alien civilization, careful investigations on the amino acid begin. It is found to improve the memory of laboratory rats. When it is finally administered to three mentally retarded children, a new super race of children is produced. These children not only become superintelligent but also become insensitive to human feelings and can also see in the dark. Further, these children decide to make the mankind free of nuclear weapons, so that it could live in peace and without fear. The climax is reached when a group of terrorists try to subvert their goal.

Although the basic plot of the Science Fiction is interesting, it leaves many questions unanswered. For instance, nothing is mentioned how the message man had sent earlier had been reproduced in a meteorite. Although the reviewer is aware of the experiments on the evolution of life on earth, he ~

*(Continued on page 56)*

Michael Arnold's

# SCIENCE SPOT

## HOW MANY PLANETS?

**E**XACTLY how many planets are there orbiting the Sun? When the composer Gustav Holst wrote his famous *Planets* suite in 1918, eight were known. Now astronomers believe there may be ten.

And it seems almost certain that there were originally at least eleven. For one planet, it's almost certain, disintegrated at some period in time not even to be guessed at, while the latest thoughts on the Moon are that it was not part of Earth which broke away, but a smaller planet 'captured' by Earth's gravitational field.

Five of the planets have been known since ancient times — Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. They can all be seen by the naked eye, and distinguished from stars by the fact that their light — being reflected from the Sun — doesn't twinkle.

Uranus, which is the seventh major planet from the Sun (counting the other five and Earth), was found by William Herschel, a British astronomer, in 1781. Like Jupiter and Saturn, it's a giant planet, much larger than Earth, but much less dense and more gaseous.

### **Eighth find**

The discovery of Neptune in 1846 was a triumph of forecasting that outdid anything the astrologers could boast. Astronomers observed certain irregularities in the path of Uranus round the Sun, and came to the conclusion that some other body was 'pull-

ing' it out of its prescribed orbit.

They calculated its size and approximate distance, then set to work to look for it. And sure enough, after much careful searching of the sky, Neptune was found. It had in fact been sighted many times over the years, but was always thought to be a star.

In time, it was found that something further away from the Sun was affecting Neptune, and a search began for a ninth planet. Pluto was found in 1930 by an American astronomer, Clyde William Tombaugh. It was where astronomers thought it would be — but much smaller and duller than they anticipated.

All this was very exciting; but there was an unexplained problem. A German scientist, JD Titius, did some involved sums back in 1766 and came up with the discovery that the distances between the planets had a mathematical ratio ... approximately double each time.

This ratio worked very well; but there was an alarming gap between Mars and Jupiter. This was in time filled by the discovery of Ceres, a small planet midway between Mars and Jupiter.

Ceres is one of the asteroids, a host of tiny planets — and it's thought they are the remains of a large planet that broke up.

### **Tenth planet?**

The further problem came with

Neptune and Pluto. The ratio doesn't fit them, and many astronomers have tended to dismiss it as another example of mathematical coincidence with a limited value.

Now they're not so sure. For Pluto is about where, on the basis of Titius's figures, Neptune should be. The latest theory is that Neptune is a satellite of Pluto.

This would perhaps account for it being smaller and duller than it was expected to be, considering the pull it's believed to exert on Uranus.

That leaves a gap in outer space to be filled by the new, tenth planet, and several scientists are now certain that such a planet exists.

One thing that helps to support their theories is that several comets orbiting the Earth have irregular paths, suggesting that they are being pulled off course by some large body so far unknown.

A counter theory which also leaves room for a tenth planet is that Pluto is a satellite of Neptune — and on the basis of their relative sizes, this is a possibility. For Neptune has a diameter of about 30,000 miles, while Pluto is only 3,600 miles across.

The mystery remains. Meanwhile, the telescopes of the world's greatest observatories are systematically scanning the heavens. If there's another planet there, sooner or later they'll find it.

(First Features)

*(Continued from page 54)*

could not understand how an experiment of this sort could enable scientists to discover a new amino acid in the meteorite. How is it that terrorists, who decide to destroy the children aboard the Space Shuttle, do nothing when another friendly spacecraft is sent for their rescue? Besides, some very exciting moments have been narrated in a few lines or so!

But for the cover, the illustrations for the text have been done very well by Neeta Gangopadhyaya keeping in view the fact that there are hardly few artists in the country who can understand science and do some imaginative illustrations needed for a Science Fiction.

**Dilip M. Salwi**

## SOLUTION TO SEPTEMBER PICTUREWORD

### Across:

1. Bush, 5. Diver, 6. Climber, 9. Glasses,
12. Beach, 13 Nail.

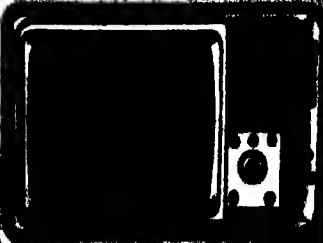
### Down:

1. Bricks, 2. String, 3. Ripe, 4. Fez,
7. Russia, 8. Pistol, 10. Lock, 11. Web.

# Jeevan and Hanu chat about OUR COMMUNICATIVE CENTURY

When watching television, you imagine that the whole screen is continuously lit. This is an illusion. Actually, the screen consists of thousands of tiny dots, strung out in 525 rows. Those dots light up one by one, moving left to right, top to bottom. This is called scanning. The entire screen is scanned 30 times every second! This is so fast that they all seem to be lit simultaneously. Different shades of darkness or brightness of each dot determine the image you actually see.

Just imagine, if you could freeze the action for one split second, you would see the dots...



above the earth. Radio waves sent upwards bounce off these layers, and come back to earth. Broadcasting stations use this effect to reach places too far away for straight-line transmissions. Radio waves are sent at an angle, so that they come back to earth far away from the radio station.



Telephones allow you to hear and be heard over great distances. Now video-telephones allow the speakers to actually see each other! Attached to the telephone is a video camera that films the speaker...and a video screen that displays the other speaker (filmed by his camera). Soon it may be possible to see whoever you wish...without leaving your chair!



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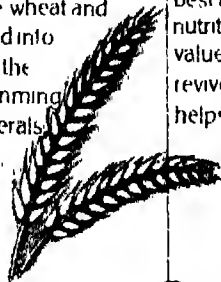
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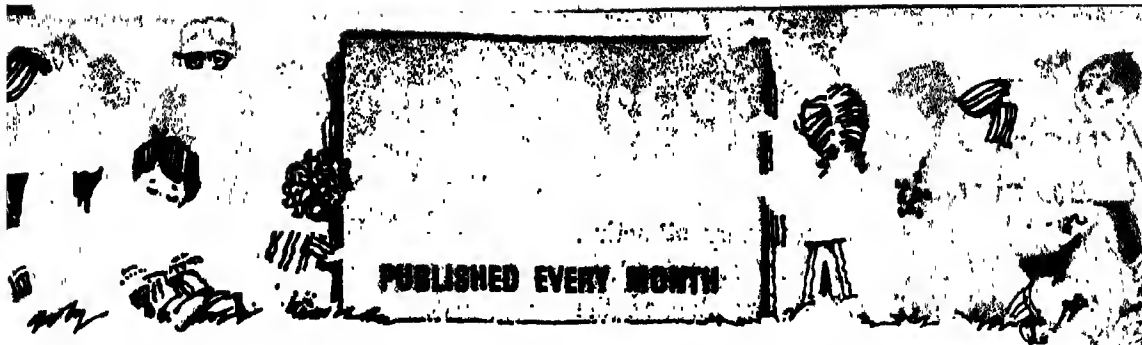
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Cover design by Subir Roy

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# Two-way Talk

*Dear Editor,*

The September issue was very attractive. I was glad to see the new mystery story, "The Third Eye". Have you stopped the Pen-friends Corner? Please restart it for our sake. *Siddhartha, Sanctoria*

I really enjoy "A Letter to You" and "Inspector Garud". Though I miss "Kapish", the other new items make up for it, especially "Tales for Children".

*Aparna Khemani, Bombay*

Children's World is a wonderful magazine. I have been reading it since 1977. My friends borrow it from me. Everyone of them is crazy after it. I like your new series on Parachuting. Could we have something on planes, too? Also more general information?

*Yeshpal Singh Eral, Vadodara*

"Prince Valiant" is exciting. I like "On the Kidnappers' Trail". Will Vinita be found? Please publish Ripley's "Believe it or not". I always look for humorous articles.

*K. Mahesh, Bhilai*

I have been reading Children's World for the last two years. At first I used to read only "Kapish". After you stopped it, I started reading other items and I find all the stories nice. I went back to all the old issues with me to read up all the stories.

*Neeta Jain, Bombay*

The October issue was superb. The stories in the magazine give me a sense of patriotism, like "From Tara with Love" (August). I wish you start a separate page for jokes and another one for puzzles.

*Srividya, Bombay*

Children's World is my favourite friend. I do not like to read any other magazine. Please give more pages.

*Manju Rose Mathews, Alayamon*

The magazine is very interesting and informative for students. It also helps improve

our English. When will you restart the Pen-friends Corner?

*Nitin Sahasrabuddha, Thane*

*Dear Readers,*

That was quite a bagful of appreciative comments from all of you. We are grateful and feel that they add to our task to ensure that you get only the very best. Come November, and we all remember "Chacha Nehru", whose birthday falls on November 14. For those who have had no opportunity to visit 'Teen Murti House' where he stayed as India's first Prime Minister, we take you around the place, now converted into a "Memorial to Nehru" (see page 12). It will soon have a planetarium—like the one in Bombay and in Calcutta—and we hope to carry a separate pictorial feature on the Delhi planetarium in one of our forthcoming issues. With "Mother Earth is Born" we begin a new series full of information, in story form. In November falls also Diwali—the festival of lights—and we have a special story for you in this issue on page 6. Tell us how you liked the story and its 10-year-old hero. Yes, Mahesh, Vinita will be found, but how and by whom will give the serial "On the Kidnappers' Trail" an exciting finale next month. We have to hold over, for unavoidable reasons, the third chapter of "The Third Eye" as well as the next instalment of "Parachuting". Both will reappear in the December issue, along with the much-awaited "Pen-friends Corner", and the results of two puzzles. There will be new puzzles and other items to keep you busy during the Christmas holidays. While we assemble all these into a mini-special number, here is to wish every one of you a Happy Diwali.

**EDITOR**

# Co-optex Capture the Festive mood



NOVEMBER 1983

DIPR/444/83/ELEGANT



# FOR YOU BANDII

## -A New Diwali

PANDURANG came out of the water, still pressing his nose with two fingers. Then, he slowly mounted the steps of the water-front, and his wet dhoti clinging to him, he walked unhurriedly towards his house, chanting the mantras with an ease that came from habit.

In the dark before dawn, there were few people on the streets, but women had begun stirring in their households. Some were sweeping their courtyards; others, already bathed, were drawing rangoli patterns at their doorsteps.

'Why?' thought Pandurang, his mind straying from God for a moment, 'it is as though one can smell Diwali, every year.' And back he went to chanting his never-ending string of names of gods and goddesses. Unmindful of the pebbles beneath his wet feet, he approached his house, a mere stone's throw from the temple where he was 'Acharya' or the head 'pujari'.

There were no signs of Diwali around his house, and 'there won't be any from now on', thought Pandurang. His wife had died eight months ago and they had had no children. Of course, he would miss the traditional sweets

that Vimala, his wife, used to prepare and the 'dijas' she lit in their courtyard in the evening. But the 'joy of Diwali'—new clothes, children laughing, singing, sparklers and 'anars', the 'bombs' exploding without warning—none of these had happened in his courtyard. No, he wouldn't mind, not celebrating Diwali—he couldn't miss what he hadn't known. But he had to get on with his chores, for he was in mourning for his wife only in private. As the Acharya, he would have to perform the 'Lakshmi pujas' in the evening and be present at the temple the whole day.

Unconsciously, he began snapping his fingers, expecting Bandu to come running to do his bidding. It was only then that he heard the quiet moaning, the unintelligible sighs. Pandurang drew nearer and peeped into his house from a window. "Aail! Aail!" wept the boy. "Aail!"

Pandurang was shocked at the sudden tug, sharp as pain, in his heart. Bandu, that quiet, speechless, silent, obedient shadow, weeping—and that, too, for his mother? Why, he was but a child when he, Pandurang, himself had taken him in—a menial to help his

wife around the house, a company for the lonely, childless woman while he was away at the temple. Bandu did not remember his father or mother. It was his kaka who had passed him as 'solace', and as he grew older, as a help to Pandurang and his wife when Bandu was only five. Bandu had far from filled the void in their ageing lives, recalled Pandurang wryly, as in a flash images of those years came before him.

All their attempts to draw out Bandu had failed. He had remained till today the way he had been—obedient to a fault and silent as a tomb.

Any grief he had suffered at Vimala's death, the boy had carefully hidden from him, thought Pandurang. And yet, this boy wept for 'Aai' (mother). A movement in the room brought Pandurang back to the present. It was Bandu. Bathed and clean even at this early hour, he sat cross-legged before a 'chamang' (low stool) on which was placed a photograph. Vimala's photo-

graph. From a brass flower-basket, Bandu picked 'parijat' flowers and strung together a garland. As he picked each flower, he sobbed, 'Aail Aail'

Pandurang's ancient reflexes suddenly seemed to be geared into action. He felt the pin-prick of tears in the corners of his eyes. 'How silly', he thought, 'Vimala wouldn't have believed it of me!' He wanted to shake off his sorrowful mood but couldn't. As he watched from the window, the pent-up torrent broke loose and as Bandu placed the completed garland round Vimala's photo, he was weeping unrestrainedly. "Aail Aai! Who'll give me Diwali again? Who'll give me my ritual bath Aai? Who'll make 'chaklis' as fine as yours, and 'laddoos' and 'karanjis'? Aai, Aai! Why did you let me know all these things, if you wanted to leave me so soon? Answer me, Aai, where is my Diwali?"

He was going to be late for the morning rituals at the temple, thought



Pandurang, but he let the boy weep his heart out. He entered the house, in the same brisk manner, only after the tiny 'durri' had been spread on the spotless kitchen floor. He found his place had been laid—with the customary tumbler of milk and two bananas. No words were spoken, as usual. Pandurang forced himself to swallow the milk. He couldn't touch the bananas. Either he'd choke, or he'd be weeping like a child before that boy of ten. He wouldn't allow that to happen. Not just yet.

It was a busy day for Pandurang at the temple. But a far from happy one. People knew, it was his first Diwali after he lost his wife. And they understood. But Pandurang didn't. It was not Vimala he was thinking of, he realized with a shock. He was thinking of Bandu. And of how he could give him a proper Diwali that very year, that very day.

New clothes? They never seemed to excite Bandu. He seemed to slip from one pair of frayed shorts and shirt into a brand new one without even noticing the difference. Crackers? Bandu would just pile up or silently hand them over to the neighbourhood kids. Sweets? Bandu was right — who could make laddoos and chaklis like Vimala?

Pandurang was at a total loss when he went home in the afternoon. He must think of something soon — but couldn't. It was only when he opened his rusted tin trunk to take out a fresh 'dhoti' for the evening that an idea struck him. He took out his green-bordered dhoti and another new one — a crisp white dhoti with a thin gold zari border.

He dressed up and then went out to the courtyard where Bandu was watering the plants unmindful of the excited

conversation between kids his own age, planning the evening's fireworks.

"Bandu," called Pandurang. And like lightning, the boy lowered the sprinkler to the ground and came to stand a foot away from his mentor, his eyes lowered.

"Here Bandu," said Pandurang, "wear this, close the doors, and come with me to the temple. I'll need you there."

Bandu took the proffered dhoti and with a hardly noticeable nod went in. 'I wonder if he'll be able to tie it,' mused Pandurang, but he did not go in to help the boy. Instead, he walked out of the little wooden gate, straight to the group of boys and girls in the maidan.

"Bina, Rahul, Tara, — in fact, all of you — I want your help," announced Pandurang.

"Yes, Baba," came a chorus of replies, "what can we do for you?"

After all, an Acharya is an important man in the village. And Pandurang had been there for years.

"Tell us, tell us, Baba," cried Tara eagerly.

"Look," began Pandurang, not sure where to begin. "Look, after the 'aarti', I mean, the Lakshmipuja is an important event today . . . . ."

"We know, we know," tempted the know-alls.

"No," Pandurang's voice was sharp, "today will be different. But all that I want you kids to do is to collect all your fireworks, and as much by way of sweets as you can, and gather in full force outside the temple. Straight after 'aarti', I want a grand fireworks display, and then you can gorge on the sweets along with a guest. My guest!"

"Right!" exclaimed the excited voices. "This is great! Fireworks and"

food — all so simple. We'll be there."

"But who is this guest?" asked Tara, curiously.

"Wait and see," muttered Pandurang. He could then see an ill-at-ease and awkward Bandu emerge from his house, lock the door, and shut the gate behind him. Without turning to see if Bandu followed him, Pandurang strode towards the temple.

Even at the temple, Pandurang failed to acknowledge Bandu's presence. He quickly issued instructions to his assistants and set about arranging the goddess's new dress and ornaments. Quietly, Bandu stood in one corner watching the proceedings, awaiting orders.

It was dusk and the temple was filling fast with people bearing their

trays of offerings. The hour of aarti arrived. The camphor was lit in the huge brass lamp. Palms were joined together, eyelids closed.

Pandurang spoke. They were not the familiar chants for the aarti. He spoke to the people. "Brothers and sisters, I am old and now a widower. I name Bandu my successor. He'll lead today's 'aarti'! I dedicate him to the service of Lakshmi . . . . . and to your service . . . . ."

The shock on Bandu's face was a delight to Pandurang. "Come, son," he beckoned to Bandu, "come and lead the aarti. Do your duty by your God and your father."

And the boy, obedient as ever,

*(Turn to page 58)*





# A LETTER TO YOU

*Dear cooks and broths,*

Do you know why I am calling you that? Cooks and broths? Because I think the world is made up of only two kinds of people, those who cook and those who are only broths.

And let me tell you, at once, that Raghu is a very very bad cook. And hot-tempered at that. Pepper, spice, and all that — twice!

Let me tell you what happened. It started off, as it almost always does, with a big fight between Raghu and Rita. He, it seems, had finished up all the red paint in her paint box, and she found that out only when . . . .

"Only when I opened the paint-box for my drawing exam," Baby said. "All the red paint. There was not a drop, not a drop, not a bit left."

For once, I felt bad for her. I had terrible memories of a day, at a painting competition, when I found there was no blue paint at all and I had been drawing 'A sunny day'. Raghu had splashed all his blue paint plus mine into a big sea with three sick looking peaunts on it which, he said, were boats.

"Why don't you mix grey with white?" he said. "It's sure to look blue. Oh, come on, artists should always think of something clever. Not go blue." And then he went off into a cackle of hideous laughter, while I mixed grey with white and white with grey and produced a sulky sky, not at all sunny and certainly not day.

Anyway, I told Raghu mildly (very mildly. I assure you) that he really shouldn't have.

■ "What do you mean, I shouldn't have?" he thundered. "Do you know what she wanted to paint with the red?"

"Roses, I suppose," I answered, even more mildly. "Girls have their little sentiments." (I had learnt up this sentence from the back cover of one of my father's books. I suppose it meant.....)

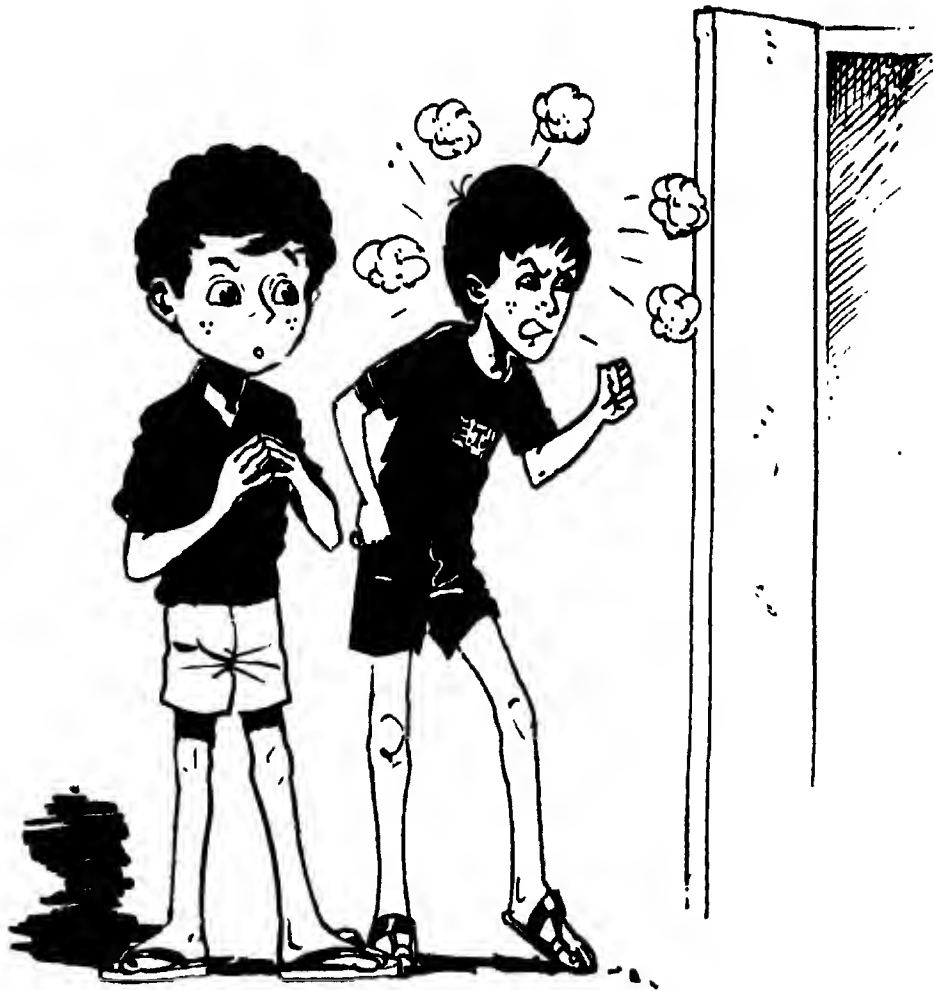
"Sentiment! Nonsense!" crackled (snarled, I should say) Raghu. "Stop throwing your undigested knowledge from book covers at me. She wanted it to draw crows! I tell you — crows!"

"Crows?" I asked stupidly. "Red crows?"

But Baby took over, at the point, tears, shrill voice and all. "So what, red crows... who asked him... paint... sunlight..... all my idea... artist..... crows are red..... who asked him..... nasty brute..... crows not blue, are they?" etc etc. ETC.

When she finally left in a fog of misery, I found Raghu looking almost as fogged in misery. 'Ha,' I said to myself, 'he is repenting. Feeling bad. After all, it is his little sister whom he has hurt.' And I put the tips of my fingers together, as I have seen people do

*(Turn to page 59)*







## A Memorial to Nehru



"I LIKE being with children and talking to them, even more playing with them. For a moment I forget that I am terribly old and that it is a long time since I was a child."

These words had come from Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. To him children were very dear.

Jawaharlal Nehru was popularly called Panditji. To children he was "Chacha Nehru". He was born on November 14, 1889, in Allahabad. The day is celebrated all over the country as "Children's Day", in memory of one who loved children—children of future India, as he called them.

As the first Prime Minister of Independent India, his official residence was a mansion situated to the south of Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. It was called "Teen Murti House".

In front of this huge mansion, there is a roundabout where stands a war memorial in memory of the officers and men of the 15th imperial service Cavalry Brigade, composed of cavalry regiments from the former princely states of Mysore, Hyderabad, and Jodhpur, who lost their lives in the First World War of 1914-1918 in Sinai, Palestine, and Syria. The epitaph reads: "Their

names liveth evermore", and gives the list of those killed in action and those who were missing. The three statues of lancers belonging to Mysore, Hyderabad, and Jodhpur stand round the war memorial on a raised platform. These three statues had given the mansion its name, Teen Murti House.

Teen Murti House was built in 1929-30 as part of the new imperial capital designed by Edwin Lutyens. It was the official residence of the Commander-in-Chief of the British army in India before India attained independence in 1947. After the departure of the last British Commander-in-Chief,

General Sir Roy Bucher, in August 1948, Teen Murti House became the official residence of India's first Prime Minister. Jawaharlal Nehru lived here for sixteen years, until his death on May 27, 1964.

Soon after Jawaharlal Nehru's death, the Government of India decided that Teen Murti House should be dedicated to his memory and should have a museum and a library. So, on November 14, 1964—Nehru's 75th birthday—the then President of India, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, formally dedicated Teen Murti House to the nation and inaugurated the Nehru

On facing page: Top An artist's impression of Teen Murti House; Below: A close-up of two of the three statues of lancers of a Cavalry Brigade.



At right: Above: The reception room at Teen Murti House; Below: A view of Panditji's study, where he used to work late into the night.



Memorial Museum.

The Museum portrays, with the help of photographs, the life and achievements of India's hero, who was the leader of the country's struggle for freedom, the architect of modern India, and a passionate preacher of world peace. It gives an intimate glimpse of Nehru's rich and complex personality: a radical nationalist and world statesman; a scholar, idealist, and historian; a man of strong family affections, who also bestowed his love equally on the common people of India.

Nearly three thousand people visit the museum daily. They not only go there to pay homage to the departed leader, but also to know his achievements and the ideals cherished by him.

Let me take you round the museum.

We enter through the main gate on to the lawns. Here, in the lawn, on one side is a massive granite rock inscribed with excerpts from Nehru's historic speech, "Tryst with Destiny". He delivered this speech at the midnight session of the Indian Constituent Assembly on August 14-15, 1947. There are two other marble tablets in the lawn, which have excerpts from Nehru's 'Will and Testament'. It is more than a will; it is a moving testimony of Nehru's deep love of India and her people.

From the lawn, we enter the museum through the portico, and walk past the "reception room". Jawaharlal Nehru used to receive members of the public in this room every morning. It is very spacious and has sofas. It is brightly lit. From here, we move on to the verandah where copies of Nehru's "Will and Testament" are displayed.

At the back of the museum building stretches the terrace garden extending

into the wide, green lawns where Nehru entertained visitors and guests when the weather was fine. An object of interest other than the plants and flowers here is the "Jawahar Jyoti", the symbolic eternal flame kept burning day and night. The "jyoti" was lit on Jawaharlal's 75th birthday in 1964 and taken 25,000 miles round the country, and installed at its present site in May 1965—a year after his death.

Next, we move through a couple of rooms to see the exhibits of his early life; his youth; his participation in the freedom struggle; the beginnings of his active life in politics; the "Emergence of Gandhiji 1915-20". "The story of the Non-cooperation Movement and After" covers the years 1921-29; the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1932; the outbreak of World War II; the 1942 Quit India Movement; the dawn of Independence; the drafting of the Constitution; and the emergence of India as a Sovereign republic and a parliamentary democracy. One of the exhibits on the same floor is the manuscript of his book, "Discovery of India."

From here we move on to his study. In this room, Jawaharlal Nehru used to sit up late into the night and go through the files, dictate letters, write notes, jot down points which he had to discuss with his colleagues the next day in Parliament. The study is stacked with books on various subjects. Nehru was a voracious reader. There is a story that a lift once got stuck up between floors in the house. It took some time for the technicians to rectify the fault and make the lift moving. When Nehru heard about the incident, his characteristic remark was that he had always thought there should be a book-shelf in every lift!

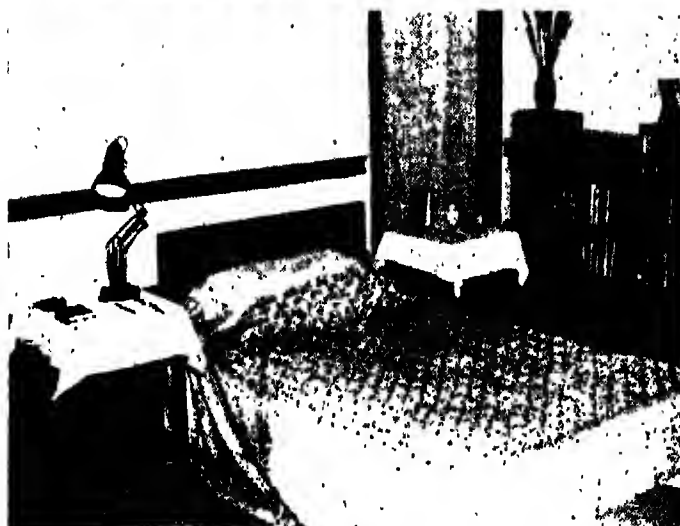
At left: The 'Bharat Ratna'-  
medal awarded to Jawahar  
lal Nehru in 1955; Right:  
A replica of the crown of  
the Queen of England.



A section of Panditji's  
collection of books.



Panditji's bedroom where  
he breathed his last.



*(Photographs by the  
author)*

The study has also a number of photographs on the walls on the bookshelves. They include the portraits of the family, Gandhiji, Tagore, Maulana Azad, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Abraham Lincoln, and George Bernard Shaw. The study gives an intimate glimpse of Nehru's many-sided personality: the statesman, book lover, historian, educationist, a man of strong family ties.

From here, we walk through a book-lined corridor, with a lot of photographs, on to a room where the many gifts received by the late Prime Minister during his foreign travels or presented to him by foreign visitors and statesmen who had called on him are exhibited. There are vases from Japan, fine porcelain pieces from the U.S.S.R., mother of pearl from Jordan, silverware from the U.S.A. and Germany, cutglass and crystalware from Czechoslovakia, a replica of the crown of the Queen of England, and many more.

In the same room we also see the gifts and medals he received within the country. One such medal is the "Bharat Ratna"—the highest award an Indian citizen can receive. It was awarded to him on September 7, 1955 by the then President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad.

From here, we move on to the last part of our tour of the museum—to Panditji's bedroom. Nehru breathed his last in this room, which has been preserved as it was on May 27, 1964. It is also furnished like the study and sitting room on the same floor. There is a bookshelf in the bedroom, too.

A small table at his bedside has a watch, a pencil, a writing pad, and a personal copy of the Bhagawad Gita.

The visitors, after going through the museum, can stay back till sunset to

witness the 'Son et Lumiere' (Sound and Light spectacle). It is held on the lawns in front of the museum every evening all through the year, except during the rainy season. It tells the story of the Freedom movement, which culminated in the dissolution of the British empire in India. It also depicts the life of Jawaharlal Nehru. The shows have both Hindi and English commentaries.

Apart from the museum, within the campus there is also a library exclusively for research scholars. A planetarium is now under construction.

The Nehru Memorial Museum at Teen Murti Bhavan thus gives a glimpse of the life and work of one of the greatest men India has ever produced, next only to Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation.

Jawaharlal Nehru lit the torch of Non-alignment, which advocates peaceful co-existence and economic co-operation between nations, irrespective of their ideological and political systems. The torch is being carried forward even today by his daughter, Indira Gandhi, the present Prime Minister.

Nehru, as I said earlier, loved children very much. His 94th birthday will be celebrated this year, on November 14. It will be a tribute to him if we follow what he had asked us to do:

**"We have to build up this great country (India) into a mighty nation, mighty in thought, mighty in action, mighty in culture, and mighty in peaceful service of humanity."**

That will be a befitting birthday present to a great departed leader.

N. Anand Rao ~

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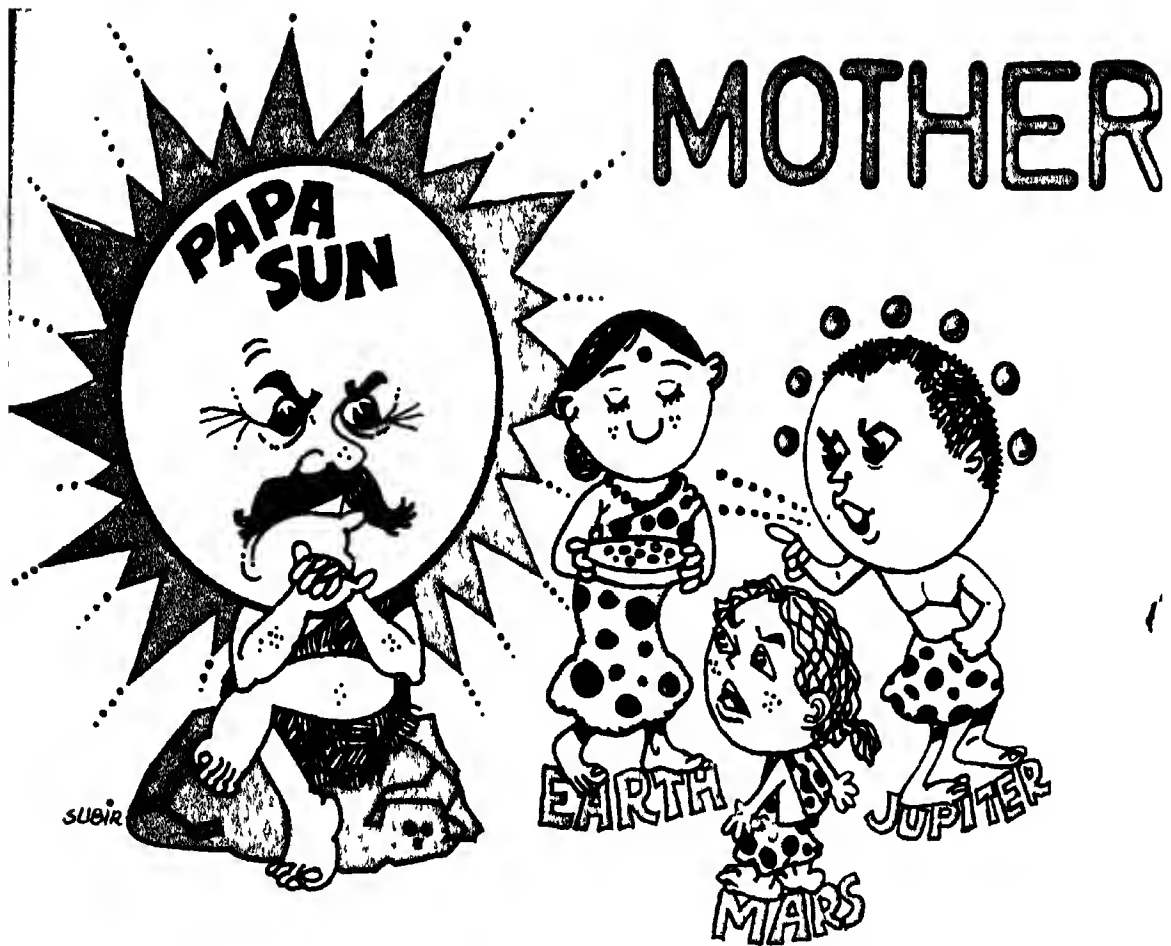
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**P**APA SUN was very angry.

The scene before him was chaotic. There was no order anywhere. Toy-moons were scattered everywhere. No one had bothered to pick them up. The harsh light, since there was never any darkness in Solar Home, lit up the grime, stains, and dirt everywhere. In the midst of this ugly scene stood his beautiful daughter, Venus. She was earnestly looking at her face in a gilded mirror. Just as she bent down to flick an imaginary speck of dirt away from her pretty gown, the mirror was rudely snatched from her hand, thrown down and stamped upon with vigorous feet. Little Pluto was the youngest and the naughtiest. There was a peal of laughter from glowing Mercury. "Serves you right, my dear sister. When I asked for your precious mirror, you refused to

give it to me. Now see what has happened."

Venus imperiously swept out without even looking at the scattered pieces of glass.

Papa Sun's face glowered. His patient daughter, Earth, a gem among this disorderly brood, was trying her best to coax the incorrigible twins, Uranus and Neptune, to tidy up their toy chest. "Why should you take all this trouble, Earth? It'll only become messy again after sometime."

"Ban the broom and save the room."

The twins doubled up with laughter at what their dark and swarthy brother, Saturn, had said while juggling with his rings.

Papa Sun's fury mounted.

"Where is my red dress? Earth, is my lunch ready?" Mars, always angry,

# EARTH IS BORN



always demanding, was shouting at the top of his voice.

"Why don't you get it for yourself, pest?" This was Big Bully Jupiter. He thought he owned the sole right to order everyone about.

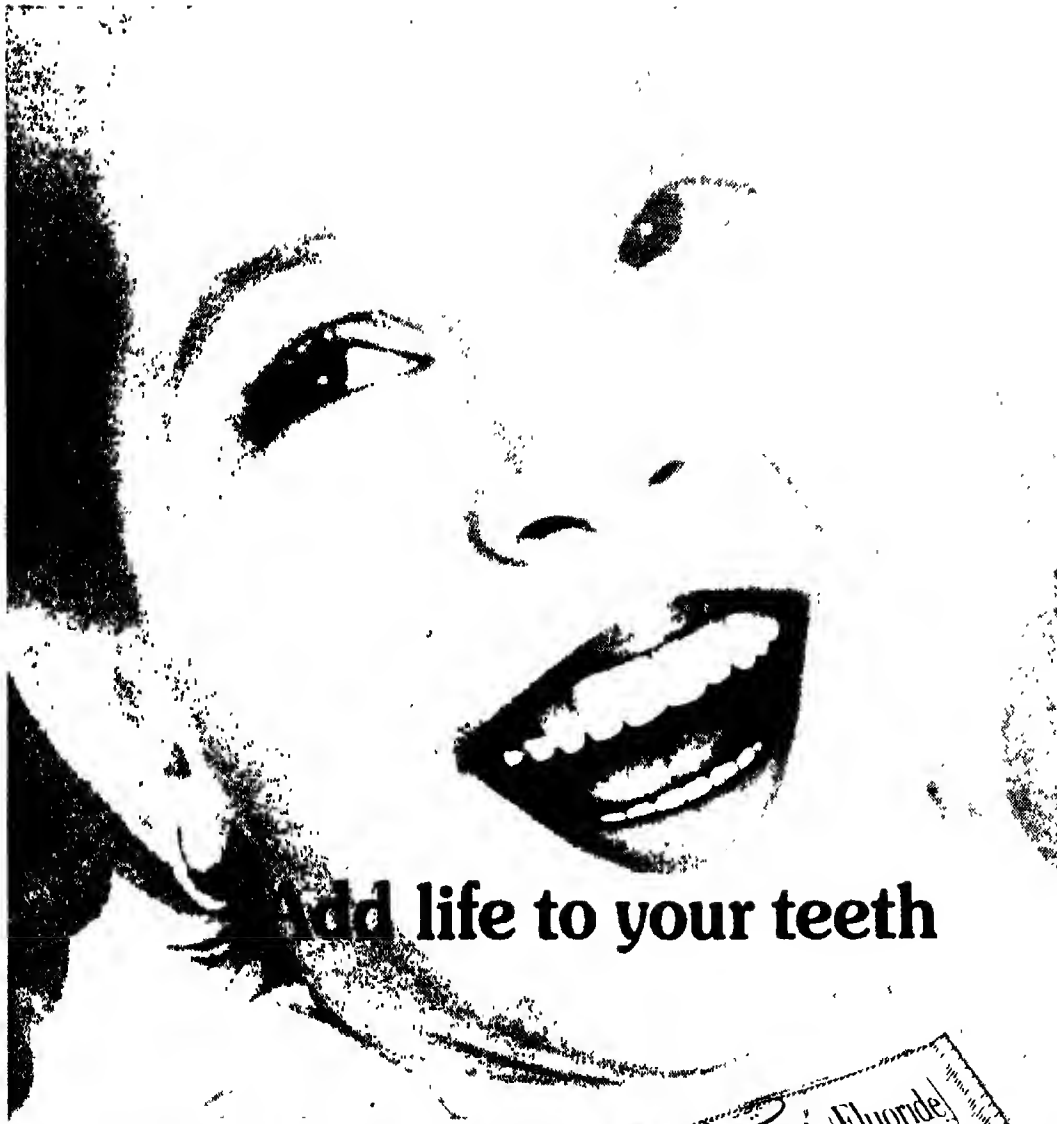
Papa Sun could not contain himself any longer. His blood boiled and the temperature rose to an alarming degree. A thought struck him suddenly. It was all his fault. He had given them too much leeway. There was no discipline because there was no one to enforce it. He was too lenient. They should have a sense of responsibility. They would acquire that only if they were left to fend for themselves. They must all leave his protective atmosphere — at once. He rose, steeled his nerves, and a mighty ball of heat generated in his body. He had made up his mind, so he

closed his eyes and gave a colossal heave. Everything stood still for a split second. Then a smashing sigh split forth from him and all his children were scattered into space like seeds.

When Sun opened his weary eyes, he automatically looked for his gentle Earth, his favourite child. She was nowhere to be seen immediately. Then, far away among the silent clouds, her dazed form appeared, hobbling up and down. It was too late to call her back. He remembered all the wasted opportunities and remained—a ball of fire. When he hesitantly extended a warm ray towards his darling pet, he thought, 'She has stamina, that bony lass. She'll come out of her stupor and look after herself.' In his loving eyes, she had just been born again.

Nirmala Chakravathy





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# INSPECTOR GARUD

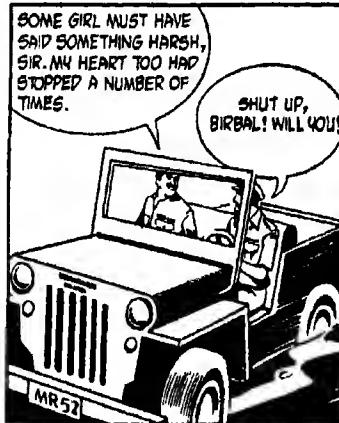
COFFINCRAFTS CO. LTD.  
Script: Anand Prakash Jain  
Illustrations: Bapu Patil



AT THE OFFICE OF THE POLICE COMMISSIONER -

DID YOU SEE THE PAPERS, INSPECTOR GARUD? YOU'LL HAVE TO GO TO THE ROCKET INSTITUTE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT DR RAMI'S DEATH. HE HAD NO HEART TROUBLE BEFORE.

YES, SIR. I'LL TAKE BIRBAL WITH ME.

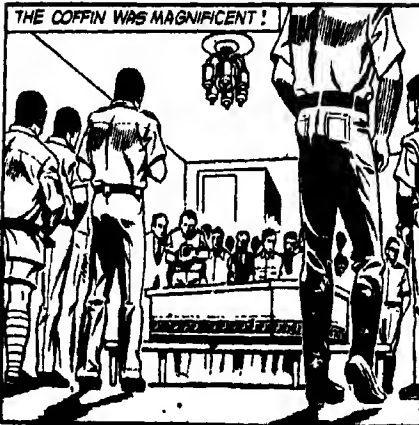


SOME GIRL MUST HAVE SAID SOMETHING HARSH, SIR. MY HEART TOO HAD STOPPED A NUMBER OF TIMES.

SHUT UP, BIRBAL! WILL YOU!



THE WHOLE TOWN SEEMED TO HAVE TURNED UP FOR DR. RAMI'S FUNERAL.



THE COFFIN WAS MAGNIFICENT!



HAD I A COFFIN LIKE THIS, I WON'T MIND DYING TODAY, SIR!

HIGH HOPES, BIRBAL! NO SUCH LUCK FOR YOU.



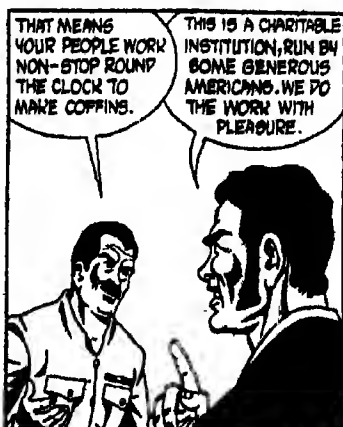
THE COFFIN MUST BE WORTH THOUSANDS!

OUR COMPANY HAS GIFTED THIS, SIR.



THEN YOUR COMPANY MUST BE DEALING IN MILLIONS? YES?

WE DON'T WORK ON THE BASIS OF PROFIT AND LOSS.



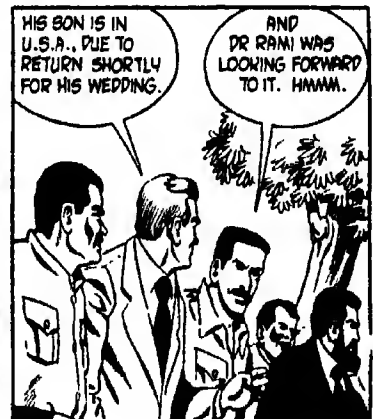
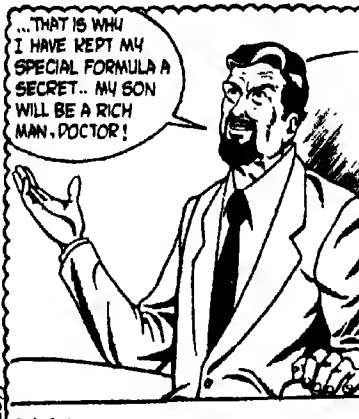
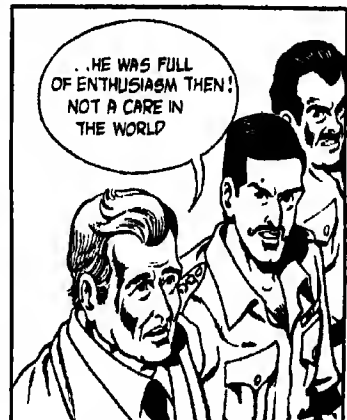
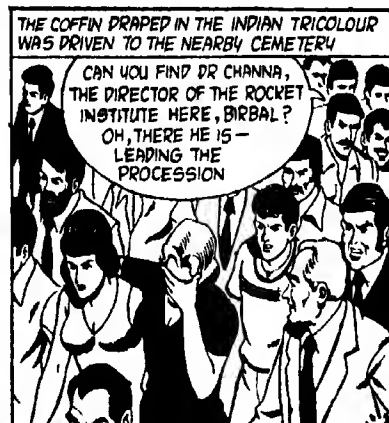
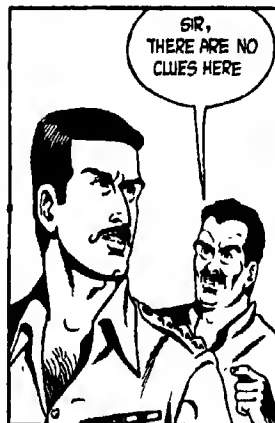
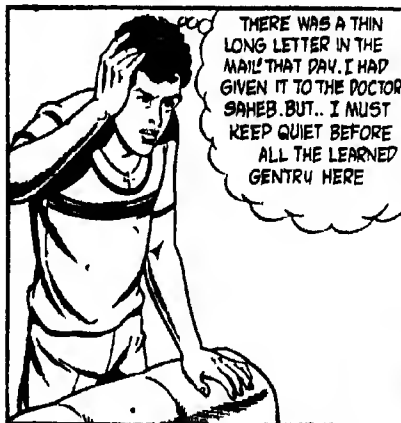
THAT MEANS YOUR PEOPLE WORK NON-STOP ROUND THE CLOCK TO MAKE COFFINS.

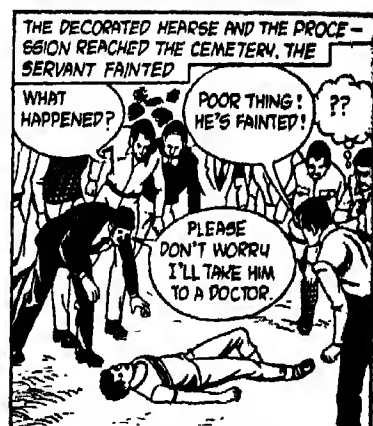
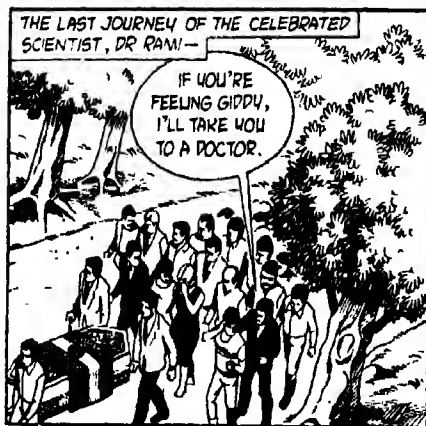
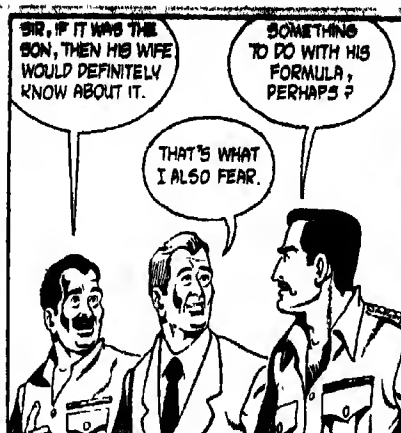
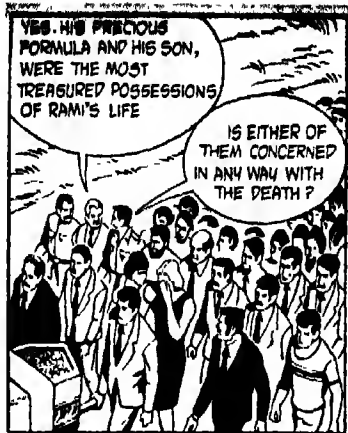
THIS IS A CHARITABLE INSTITUTION, RUN BY SOME GENEROUS AMERICANS. WE DO THE WORK WITH PLEASURE.

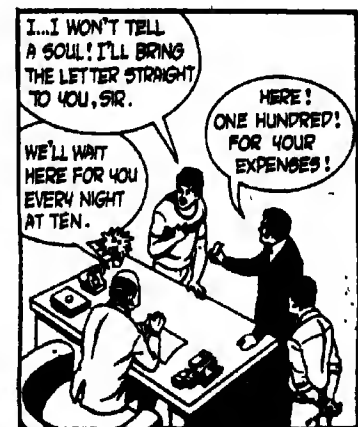
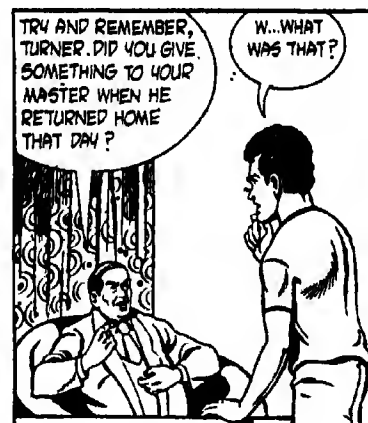


WHAT'S THIS, SIR? THEY FEEL PLEASURE IN MAKING COFFINS!

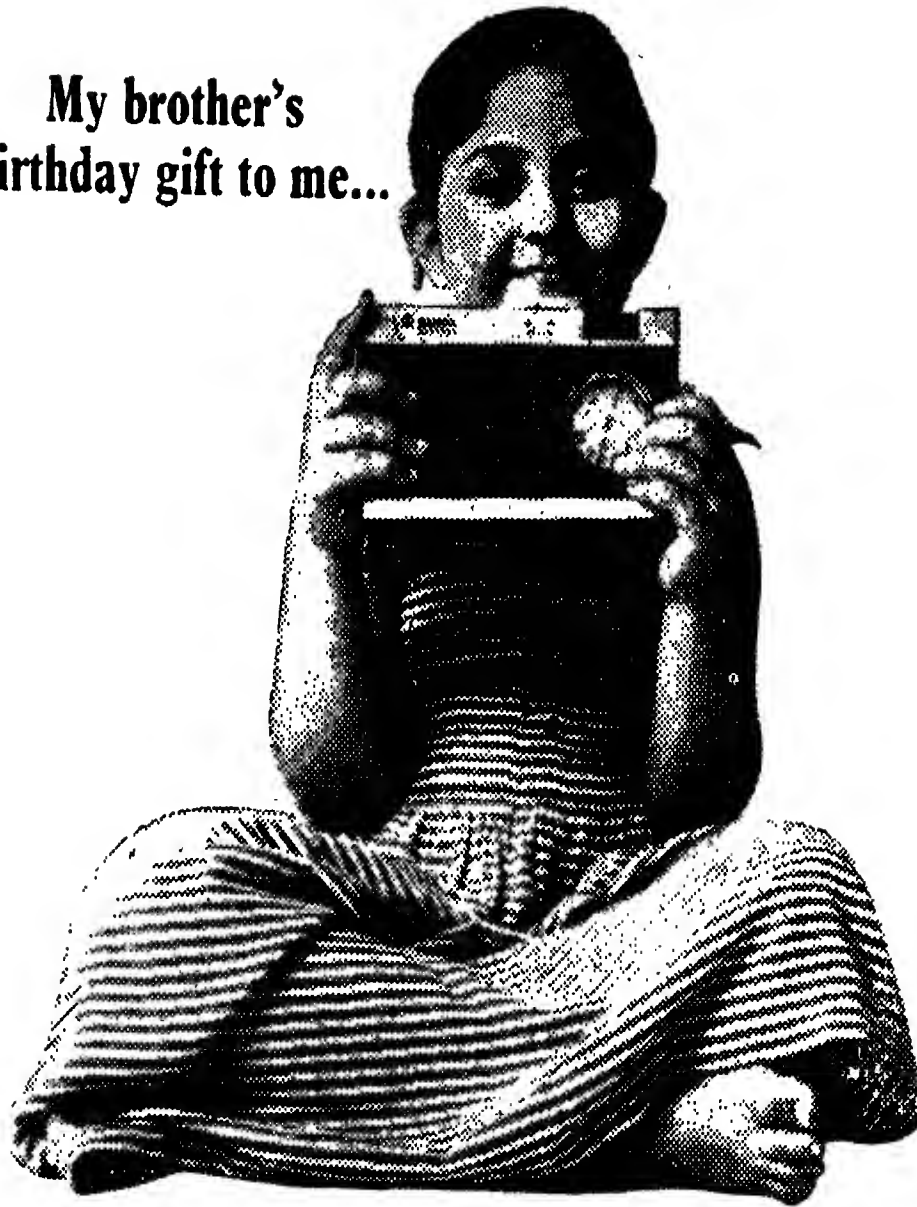
THESE ARE SOME ECCENTRICITIES OF MILLIONAIRES, BIRBAL.







**My brother's  
birthday gift to me...**



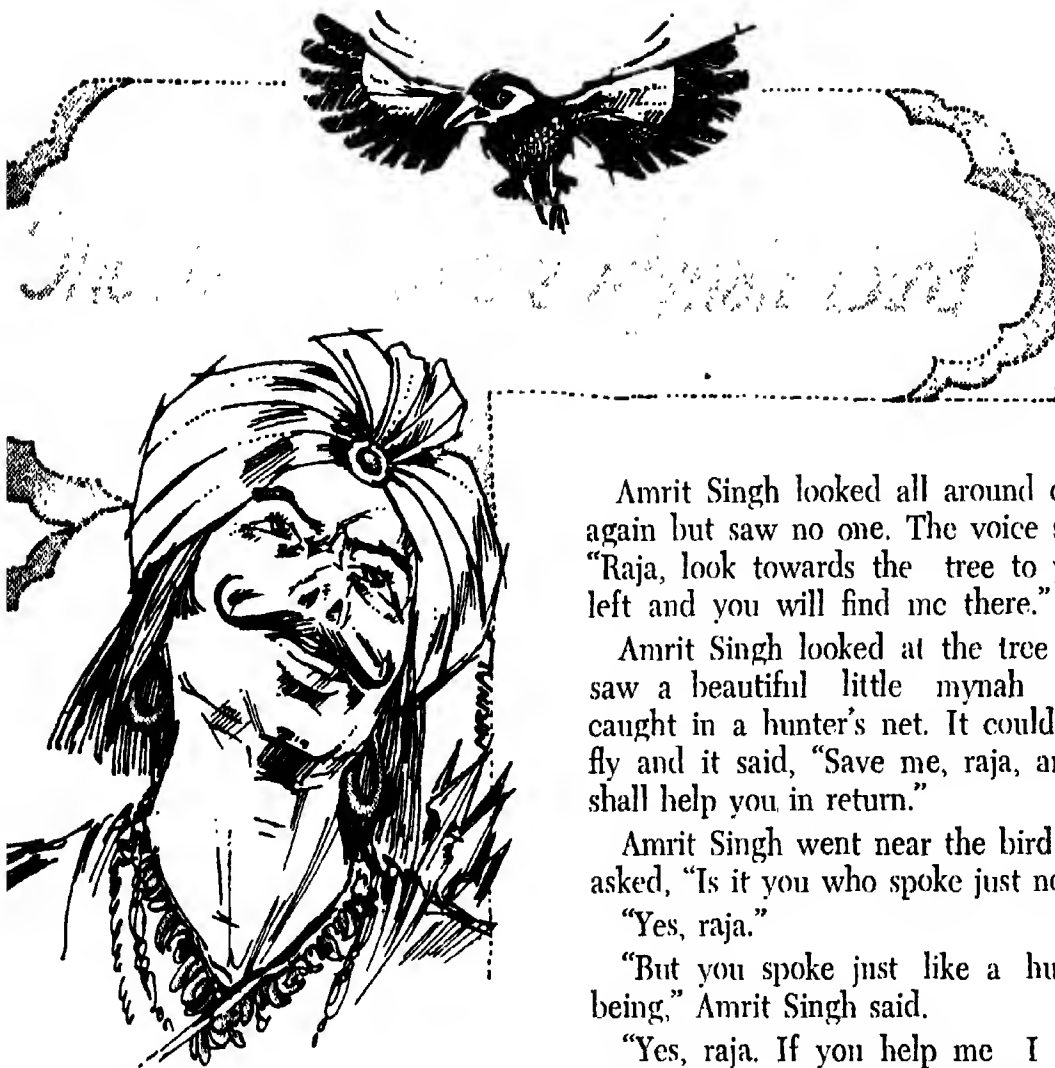
**From his pocket money saved with  
UCOBANK.**

How sweet of him to buy me this transistor ! From his pocket money saved with UCOBANK. It's where money grows. Because they pay you something for keeping your money with them. They call it INTEREST.

An interesting way to make your pocket money grow. Isn't it ?



**United Commercial Bank**  
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ONCE there was a king named Amrit Singh who was very fond of hunting. One day while hunting, he got separated from his companions and lost his way in the jungle. Hungry, thirsty and tired, he sat down to rest under the shade of a tree. Just as he was dropping off to sleep, he heard someone say, "O, great raja, save me and I shall always be grateful to you."

It was a girl's voice and the king jumped up and looked all around him but saw no one. He drew his sword, thinking that perhaps it was a witch who might harm him with her magic. The voice said again, "Raja, put back your sword. You don't need to use it."

Amrit Singh looked all around once again but saw no one. The voice said, "Raja, look towards the tree to your left and you will find me there."

Amrit Singh looked at the tree and saw a beautiful little mynah bird caught in a hunter's net. It could not fly and it said, "Save me, raja, and I shall help you in return."

Amrit Singh went near the bird and asked, "Is it you who spoke just now?"

"Yes, raja."

"But you spoke just like a human being," Amrit Singh said.

"Yes, raja. If you help me I shall help you in return," the bird said.

Amrit Singh cut the net with his sword and the bird was free. She flew up and sat on the branch of a tree. "Thank you, raja," she said. "Now I shall help you."

Amrit Singh laughed at the idea of the little mynah helping him, but the bird said, "Don't laugh, raja. You have lost your way in the jungle and I can help you reach home. If you follow me, I shall lead you out of the jungle."

The mynah flew ahead and Amrit Singh rode behind it till they reached the edge of the jungle from where he knew the way back. Amrit Singh thanked the bird and said, "I never imagin-



ed that a little bird like you could help me."

The mynah said, "Raja, never make the mistake of thinking that small and lowly creatures aren't able to help the mighty ones. Given the chance, we can work wonders."

Amrit Singh was quite charmed with the mynah bird and he asked, "Mynah, will you come with me and live with me in my palace?"

"Yes," said the mynah. "I shall live in your palace, raja, but you must promise never to shut me up in a cage."

Amrit Singh promised and the mynah went with the king to the palace to live there with him. Amrit Singh kept the bird in his private rooms, but did not tell anyone that he had brought home a mynah bird. He himself fed the bird and gave it water to drink in a small earthen dish.

Soon, Amrit Singh became very fond of the little bird. As soon as he returned home, he hurried to his room to talk to the mynah. He liked to hear the bird talk; she was so clever and witty. In due course, the palace servants heard Amrit Singh talking to the mynah and thought that it was a girl to whom he was talking. They told each other that their raja had married and brought home his bride. They carried the news to Amrit Singh's mother who lived in another part of the palace. The Queen Mother sent for Amrit Singh and said, "Son, if you wished to marry and bring home a wife, you should have told me about it. I would have arranged a proper wedding and welcomed your wife."

Amrit Singh said, "I haven't married anyone, Mother. If I wanted to marry, I would have told you and taken your permission."

"All the palace servants have heard you talking to your wife," the Queen

Mother said. "How can you say that you aren't married?"

Amrit Singh guessed that they had mistaken the bird's voice for a girl's, but he did not want to tell anyone that he spent his time talking to a bird. He felt that everyone would laugh at him, so he said, "Mother, believe me. I am not married."

"Then who is the woman to whom you talk?" the Queen Mother asked.

Amrit Singh replied, "I am sorry, Mother, but I can't tell you that."

The Queen Mother was very angry but she did not say anything. When she returned to her own rooms, her





elder daughter, who was married and had come on a visit, said, "Mother, I don't know why brother keeps his wife in his rooms and doesn't allow her to meet us. But let's use a trick to see her."

"What trick?" the Queen Mother asked.

"My younger sister's wedding is to take place next month. You must tell my brother that his wife must help in preparing for the wedding. Tell him that it is the custom in our family for the daughter-in-law to clean the dal and rice and wheat. Then she will have to come out to do it."

The Queen Mother liked the idea. She went to Amrit Singh and told him what her daughter had said. Amrit Singh said, "Very well, Mother, I shall ask her if she will do it."

When Amrit Singh returned to his room, the mynah saw how worried he looked and asked, "What is the matter, raja?"

He told her what his mother had said and she replied, "I will clean the rice and the wheat and the dal, but it

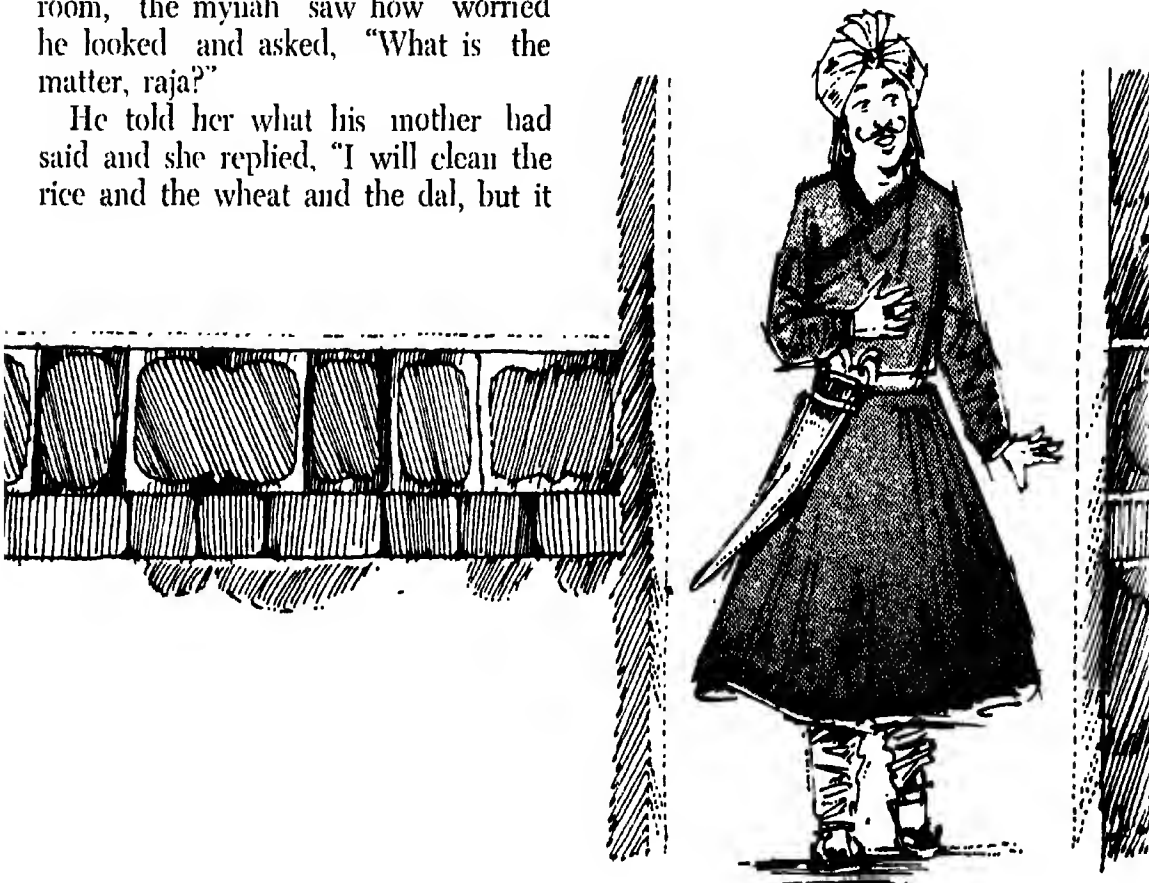
must be brought here to this room. I won't go out to do it."

Amrit Singh asked, "How can you clean the several sacks of grain which will be needed for the wedding?"

"Don't worry about that, raja," the mynah said. "Just get the grain here and have it taken out of the sacks and spread on the floor. I shall do the rest."

Amrit Singh was doubtful if the mynah could do it, but he told his mother that the sacks of grain should be sent to his room to be cleaned. When the sacks arrived, the grain was spread out and after the servants had gone, the mynah said, "Leave me alone for the whole day, raja, and lock the room from outside so that nobody may come in. By evening the work of cleaning will be done."

As soon as she was alone, the mynah



flew to the window sill and sitting on it sang a song calling to the other birds to come and help her clean the grain. The birds heard and flew into the room. They pecked and separated the bits of stones and other dirt from the grain. After the work was done they flew away.

When Amrit Singh returned he was happy and surprised to see the work done. He called the servants and sent the grain back to his mother.

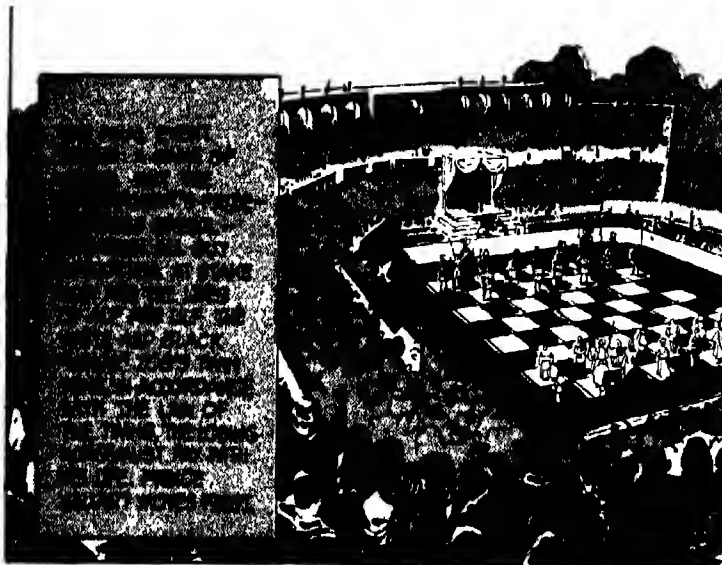
The Queen Mother could find no fault with the way the grain had been cleaned, but she was unhappy that she had not managed to see her son's wife. Her elder daughter said, "Mother, you must ask the girl to grind the grain and make it into flour. Tell brother that it is the custom for the son's wife to grind flour for a wedding in the family. She will have to come out to grind the grain into flour."

The Queen Mother told so to Amrit Singh and again he was worried. "What troubles you now, raja?" the mynah bird asked.

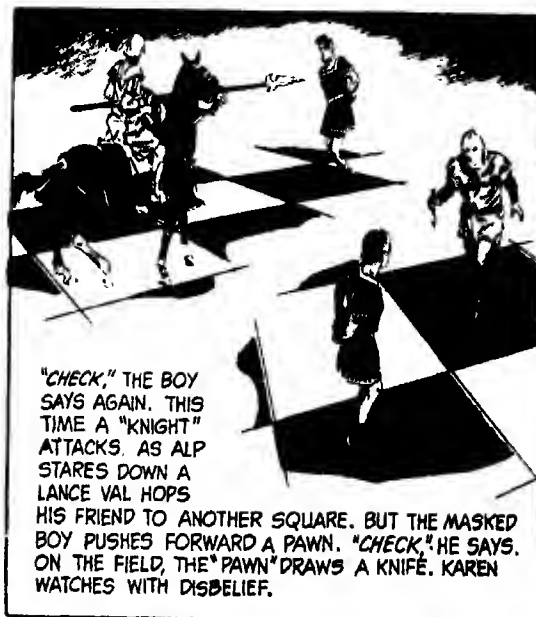
Amrit Singh told her and she said, "Don't worry, raja. Just ask them to send the grain here. Have it taken out of the sacks and spread out on the floor. I shall do the rest."

Soon, sacks of wheat were brought to Amrit Singh's room and the grain spread out on the floor. As before, the mynah said, "Leave me alone for the whole day, raja, and lock the room from outside so that no one may be





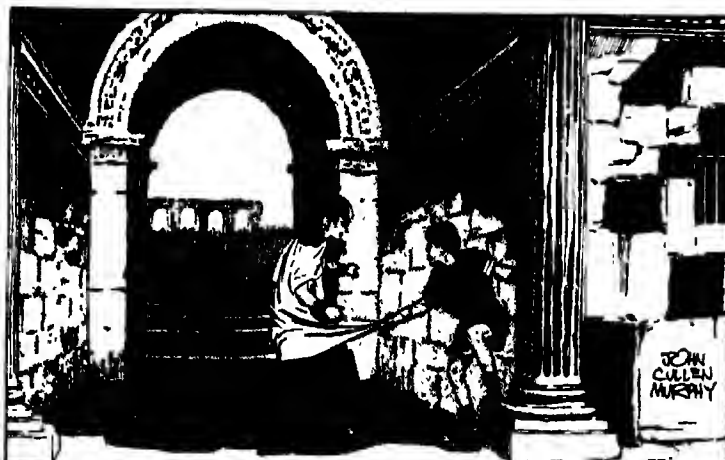
FOR A TIME THE GAME PROCEEDS UNEVENTFULLY. PIECES ARE TRADED AS VAL AND THE MASKED BOY VIE FOR POSITION. HOURS PASS.



"CHECK," THE BOY SAYS AGAIN. THIS TIME A "KNIGHT" ATTACKS. AS ALP STARES DOWN A LANCE VAL HOPS HIS FRIEND TO ANOTHER SQUARE. BUT THE MASKED BOY PUSHES FORWARD A PAWN. "CHECK," HE SAYS. ON THE FIELD, THE "PAWN" DRAWS A KNIFE. KAREN WATCHES WITH DISBELIEF.



SHE HAD LEARNED THAT HER BROTHER GALAN, FOR REASONS SHE COULD NOT GUESS, WAS PLAYING THE MASKED BOY'S ROLE. BUT WHY WAS HE BEHAVING SO?



WHY WAS HE RELENTLESSLY SENDING ALP TO HIS DOOM? SHE HAD PROMISED TO SAFEGUARD GALAN'S IDENTITY, BUT AS A FANFARE SIGNALS INTERMISSION SHE CHANGES HER MIND. HER SKIRTS ARE DETAINED BY A DETERMINED HAND. "KAREN, WAIT," GALAN SAYS. "THE MASKED BOY-- THIS TIME HE IS NOT ME," AND IN DESPERATION HE TELLS HER ALL.

JOHN CULLEN MURPHY



PRINCE VALIANT FACES  
THE MASKED BOY AS  
THEIR GAME OF CHESS

IS PLAYED OUT IN THE ARENA AT STAKE ARE THE LIVES OF THE TWO  
"KINGS", ALP AND ULF, ZOG'S TWIN SONS. WHEN A BREAK IS CALLED, VAL,  
FIGHTING TO SAVE ALP ARSLAN, IS LOSING BADLY. IN A DARK PASSAGE GALAN  
ACCOMTS KAREN AND SPEAKS TERRIBLE WORDS "THE MASKED BOY..."



"... THIS TIME HE IS NOT ME.  
HE IS A LITTLE MAN NAMED  
ADAM WHO IS PLAYING TO WIN."  
AND GALAN SPINS A TALE OF  
THWARTED LOVE.



"THE STORY REALLY BEGINS IN THE DAYS OF KING  
ULRIC WHO COULD BARELY LOOK A SHEEPDOG IN THE  
EYE. VAIN OF HIS APPEARANCE, HE BEGAN RECRUITING  
PALACE GUARDS FOR THEIR HEIGHT. THE CUSTOM  
TOOK HOLD AND MANY YEARS LATER ADAM WAS  
TAKEN INTO KING ZOG'S HOUSEHOLD.



"THERE HE CAME  
TO KNOW PRINCESS  
GRENDL. BECAUSE  
HE WAS COCKY AND  
SELF-CONFIDENT.  
ONE DAY ADAM  
MADE HIS MOVE.  
THEY FELL IN  
LOVE. BEFORE  
LONG, THE KING  
LEARNED THEIR  
SECRET AND SET  
HIS TRAP. THE  
TRYSTING PAIR  
WAS DISCOVERED  
AND ADAM WAS  
DISMISSED.



JOHN COLLAMURPHY

"HE BIDD HIS TIME. WHEN ZOG ANNOUNCED A TOURNEY TO CHOOSE  
A HUSBAND FOR GRENDL, ADAM KNEW HIS CHANCE HAD COME.  
YET HE KNEW NOTHING OF SWORDPLAY. HIS ONLY GAME WAS CHESS. HE  
CONCEIVED A GREAT DECEPTION, AND WHEN HE SAW YUAN CHEN AND ME  
FOU SOME THUGS, SETTLED ON HIS PARTNERS. IT TURNED OUT I WAS  
EXACTLY HIS SIZE. YOU KNOW THE REST.



"WHY WE WERE IN SALONAE I  
WILL TELL YOU SOME OTHER  
TIME. RIGHT NOW WE MUST SET  
THINGS RIGHT," AND KAREN SAYS  
TO HER BROTHER: "DID YOU SAY  
HE WAS COCKY?"

"THIS ADAM WHO TOOK YOUR PLACE," KAREN ASKS HER BROTHER, "YOU SAID HE WAS A COCKY FELLOW?" AND GALAN NODS: "WHEN HE HAS THE UPPER HAND HE GLOATS." KAREN HURRIES OFF, REMEMBERING THAT OVERCONFIDENCE MAKES A FINE BLINDFOLD. JUST AS THE BREAK IN THE GAME IS ABOUT TO END, SHE BRINGS HER FATHER REFRESHMENTS -- AND ADVICE.



VAL SMILES AT HIS DAUGHTER'S IDEA. IT WILL TAKE ALL THE SKILL HE CAN MUSTER, BUT IT MIGHT WORK. HE RESUMES THE GAME.



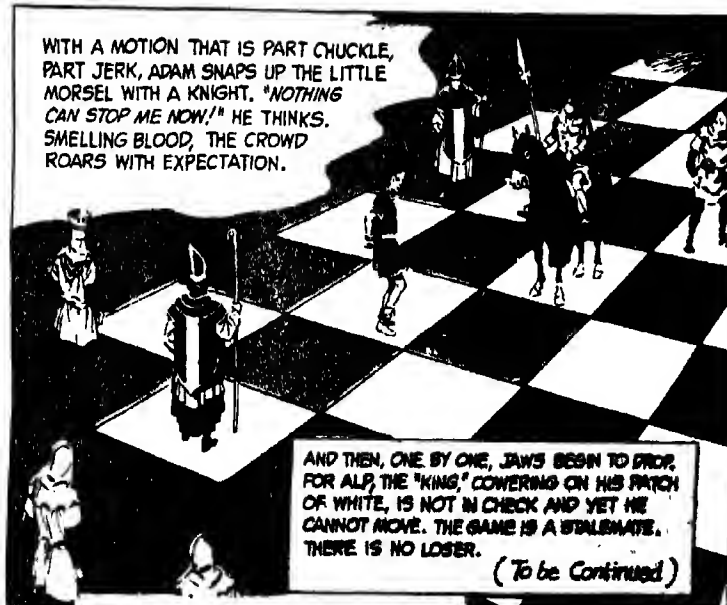
A LIFE IS AT STAKE. IF VAL LOSES, ALP, THE WHITE "KING" WILL FORFEIT HIS LIFE. IF ADAM, THE MASKED OPPONENT, LOSES, THE VICTIM WILL BE ULF. VAL IS OUTMATCHED, AND THE CROWD JEERS HIS LATEST MOVE. IN A TRICE ADAM CAPTURES THE PIECE. VAL TRIES AGAIN.



ANOTHER BLUNDER. HIS MIGHTY WHITE QUEEN FALLS TO AN AGING BISHOP. MOVE AFTER MOVE ADAM POUNCES, SMACKING HIS LIPS. A WHIFF OF VICTORY STARTS HIS BODY SHAKING PLEASURABLY. EACH CONQUEST BRINGS HIM CLOSER TO HEAVEN. NOW VAL HAS ONLY TWO PIECES LEFT...



... ALP ARSLAN AND A PAWN. HE HAS PLAYED CAREFULLY-- BUT ALSO QUICKLY, TO STOKE ADAM'S MOOD. VAL PUSHES FORWARD HIS LAST PAWN.

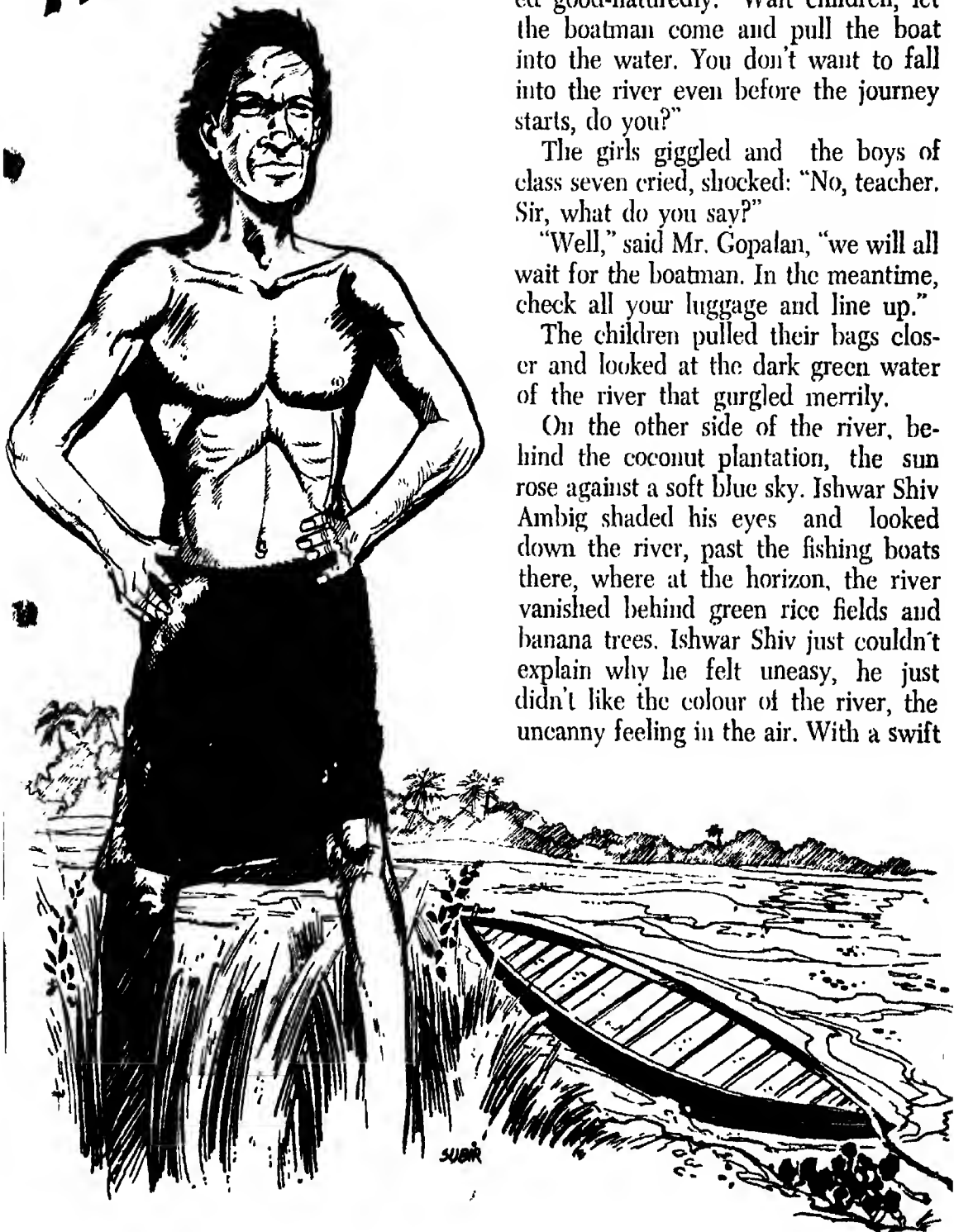


WITH A MOTION THAT IS PART CHUCKLE, PART JERK, ADAM SNAPS UP THE LITTLE MORSEL WITH A KNIGHT. "NOTHING CAN STOP ME NOW!" HE THINKS. SMELLING BLOOD, THE CROWD ROARS WITH EXPECTATION.

AND THEN, ONE BY ONE, JAWS BEGIN TO DROP. FOR ALP, THE "KING," COWERING ON HIS PATCH OF WHITE, IS NOT IN CHECK AND YET HE CANNOT MOVE. THE GAME IS A STALEMATE. THERE IS NO LOSER.

(To be Continued)

# ISHWAR SHIV'S MIRACLE



IT WAS a wonderful clear morning, the 12th of February 1964, when the children of the Divgi village Primary School grouped around two of their teachers at the bank of the Aghanashini river and cried: "Miss Devijan, please let us start now. Please teacher, we are wasting so much of time here."

Mr. Gopalan and Miss Devijan smiled good-naturedly. "Wait children, let the boatman come and pull the boat into the water. You don't want to fall into the river even before the journey starts, do you?"

The girls giggled and the boys of class seven cried, shocked: "No, teacher. Sir, what do you say?"

"Well," said Mr. Gopalan, "we will all wait for the boatman. In the meantime, check all your luggage and line up."

The children pulled their bags closer and looked at the dark green water of the river that gurgled merrily.

On the other side of the river, behind the coconut plantation, the sun rose against a soft blue sky. Ishwar Shiv Ambig shaded his eyes and looked down the river, past the fishing boats there, where at the horizon, the river vanished behind green rice fields and banana trees. Ishwar Shiv just couldn't explain why he felt uneasy, he just didn't like the colour of the river, the uncanny feeling in the air. With a swift



movement of his strong dark hand, he brushed the black curly hair off his forehead and scanned the sky. Yet there was no sign of even the smallest cloud and the wind that touched his dark broad face was gentle and warm.

It was a perfect day for an excursion.

"Oh, good morning, good morning," cried a small but wiry man in a dark lungi behind him. His weather-beaten, black face had a humorous good natured expression.

"A lo," he laughed tying up his lungi. "Everybody ready?"

"Yes, yes," cried the children impatiently, "let us start, please."

The boatman pulled the long thirty seat rowing boat ashore. He tied it expertly to a pole and jumped inside, and then standing at the rear he extended his hands and beckoned to the teacher to jump into the boat.

Miss Devijan was the first to get in. Holding up her saree, she climbed clumsily inside, shrieking as she nearly lost her balance. But the strong arm of the boatman steadied her. Then the children jumped in one by one, giggling, laughing, pushing each other accidentally or deliberately.

"Now children, now," cautioned the teacher, "sit down quietly, and don't jump up, otherwise the boat might turn over. You don't want to fall into the water, right at the beginning of the journey?"

"No, Miss, no," cried the children in unison. They wriggled into a more comfortable position, stowed their bags away and looked at the teacher and the boatman with eyes shining in eager anticipation. The boatman pushed the boat with a long wooden stick off the shore. Then he settled down

behind a pair of massive oars.

"What about a good song?" he asked and winked at the children. "You seem to know none."

"Of course, of course, we know many," cried the children. They shouted, sang and whistled all at the same time. Soon the first song in Kannada rang out into the warm air, accompanied by the gurgle of the water and the regular beat of the boatman's oars.

Soon they had reached the middle of the river where the strong current carried the boat downstream.

The children soon grew tired of singing. Leaning against each other's shoulder, they watched the countryside glide by; little villages, where young women washed clothes by the river and young boys shepherded their goats. The children waved out joyfully and were thrilled when their greetings were answered.

Soon they started to open their food parcels and munched their rice and idlis happily.

No one noticed the dark cloud rising like an angry fist from behind the palm groves. It was only when a sudden wind whirled over the water that the boatman started.

He glanced, alarmed, down the river, his dark eyes filled with worry and concern.

Then, with a sudden change of expression he cried out: "What's it, children, no more songs? A lo, here we go, clap your hands and sing." And to Miss Devijan he whispered aside: "Keep them occupied and cheerful. I'll try to reach the next village before the storm."

"Storm?" shrieked Miss Devijan. "Oh god!"

But then she checked herself and

drawing her arm around the girl next to her, she smiled. "Let us sing a fisherman's song. Hey, Ishwar, you should know so many. Your father is a fisherman, isn't it?"

"Yes, Miss," answered Ishwar Shiv and tried hard to recollect the many songs he had sung with his father. It was not easy, for he was worried. He suddenly realised that he had known it all along. Somewhere behind the soft blue sky a storm was building up. Then he checked himself and sang loud and gay, sang while the wind tore at the trees, whipped the water. He sang on till the girls suddenly shrieked, clasp- ing their flying hair with their hands.



"A storm, a storm!"

Waves like angry tongues splashed against the boat, reached inside, and drenched the clothes of the children.

"A lo," cried the boatman against the wind, "nothing to worry, kids, every- thing is fine. The boat is steady. She will not let us down."

"Of course, of course," encouraged Mr. Gopalan. "Calm down children. The wind will subside."

The children looked at their teachers with pale faces, kneading their fingers nervously.

Ishwar Shiv shook his head slightly. He knew that the storm would not sub- side. Lightning flicked over an un- canny sky as the storm built up faster, roaring.

The water around them seemed to boil and sucked the boat into the speed- ing current of the river.

The boatman rowed with all his might, putting every ounce of strength in each stroke.

'We aren't making it to Tinpar,' he murmured as if to himself. 'We must try to get ashore.'

The children sat motionless, struck by fear. They looked at the wall of black cloud that crawled over the sky, like a big evil monster swallowing big chunks of it, swallowing it all.

The wind became stronger. The waves rose around the boat that pitched like a toy.

The boatman struggled with the oars, using all his strength to break through the current and make for the shore. His face was tense, beads of perspira- tion rolled down his temples. He rowed on, rowed on, rowed.

"Ah, we're drowning!" the high pitch-



ed shriek of a girl released the pent up emotion of the children. Hiding their faces in their hands or at each other's shoulder, the girls began to cry.

"Teacher, I can't swim. I can't swim. Help...."

Mr. Gopalan raised his hand. "Calm down, calm down, children. Nothing is going to happen. I assure you, we will reach the shore in just a few minutes. Now sit down, sit orderly, don't jump up or the boat will lose its balance. Please don't panic, we will be safe on land in no time. Isn't it Miss Devijan?"

Though pale and trembling, Miss Devijan managed to smile. "Of course children, don't worry, we will soon be on land. See, the boatman has managed to cut through the current. Now that is wonderful, now nothing will happen."

The boatman smiled and nodded. "I'm an experienced fisherman," he grinned. "I and my boat, we have seen many a storm and we have always survived, so why not now?"

The teachers smiled and Ishwar could feel the tension ease. But suddenly the boat trembled as if shaken by an invisible hand. Water swept inside the boat and a spray hit their faces. The children shrieked in unison, a seemingly never ending scream as the boat reared up and the boatman was lifted off his seat. Pulling the left oar with him, he shot head first into the water. The children were thrown off the benches. Covering their heads with their arms protectingly, they crouched on the floor, screaming in panic.

"Children, children!" Mr. Gopalan tried to soothe them. "Please, listen." But his words were torn away by the storm.

"Children, children! Calm down!"

The children pushed towards the rear of the boat, crying and sobbing pathetically. Ishwar Shiv stared down into the turbulent water. Then he gazed towards the shore trying to gauge the distance. He lifted his eyes to the threatening sky and knew that behind those pitch black clouds waited a storm so furious and wild that if caught by it in the boat, they would whirl helplessly down the river.

Oh it was all too hopeless. Suddenly he saw the boatman's head pop up from behind the rim of the boat. He looked straight into Ishwar's eyes and cried, "Throw me the rope, boy, throw me that rope. I'll try to pull you all ashore. With trembling hands Ishwar felt for the rope, not taking his eyes off the struggling man in the water. He grabbed the rope and pulled it towards him, throwing the end overboard into the water.

'It's impossible,' he thought, 'he can't make it. The current is too strong!'

The boat shook violently; it rocked and wobbled and would have spun around had not the boatman arrested its movement. He had jerked the rope over his shoulder and struggled through the current.

Ishwar Shiv followed him with his eyes. He saw him disappear and emerge again, panting, gulping in a great lungful of life-giving air.

Ishwar Shiv grabbed the rim of the boat and held on to it desperately, wishing he could do something, he could help. Suddenly he saw a turmoil of raging waters tear the rope off the boatman's hands. The last Ishwar Shiv saw of him was his gaping mouth



opened in a soundless scream. Then the water drew him under. The scream died on Ishwar's lips. He felt the boat rise and spin around. Without thinking, he leaped into the rushing water and fought for the rope. He felt something sweep past him and lunged out at it. It was the rope. He grabbed it tight, drew it twice around his waist and began to swim. But there was little chance of swimming. The angry water boiled around him, tried to suck him under. Sometimes he was under and sometimes he was above. But all the time he was in violent motion, kicking his legs forcefully, pressing through the water with his back.

The storm roared around him; lightning flicked. The river growled and the children inside the boat shrieked petrified. And above it all, the terror-stricken voice of Miss Devijan reached him.

Ishwar Shiv pulled on, trying to breathe as regularly as possible. He edged away from the turbulent current of the river, towards the shore. The weight of the boat seemed to pull him backwards and he felt he was swimming at a fixed spot. But when he gazed over his shoulder towards the river side, he noticed, that they had almost reached the shore. He could make it! He should! Straining every muscle Ishwar Shiv forced his way through the water pulling the rope and the boat behind him.

Suddenly he felt the water getting shallower and when he searched for ground, he struck the sandy stony river bed with his feet. Pulling the rope over his right shoulder he pushed through the breast deep water, leaning heavily forward.

"Ishwar, Ishwar!" he heard the chil-

children shout. "Ishwar!" Ishwar did not answer. Everything in him concentrated on pulling the rope. He worked his way painfully through the water; every movement was a superhuman effort, pulling what seemed like tons of weight. He had stopped thinking long ago, he just moved his legs and pulled the rope.

Pulling it, he heard nothing, neither the raging storm nor the cries of the children.

And then he had reached land and fell onto the sand. But he did not leave the rope that had cut deep into his flesh, did not leave it even when he sensed the children jump on land, and hurry away from the river. His whole body pained, his sore shoulder stung. He

coughed painfully and sucked in the air in rapid gulps. Suddenly he felt a cold trembling hand lift up his face and help him tenderly onto his back. Stroking the wet curly hair off his perspiring face, Miss Devijan whispered, "You have saved our lives, Ishwar. Without you, we would have drowned along with the boatman. It's like a miracle."

Ishwar Shiv tried to smile. Looking over his teacher's shoulder at the angry water and the black thundering sky, he suddenly wondered how he had made it.


Yes, his teacher was right, it was like a miracle, indeed it was.

Sigrun Srivastava

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# THE MISSING GOLDFISH

CHETAN was feeling down in the dumps. It had been raining cats and dogs all Friday night and the morning was cold, grey and damp. He looked out of the window for the hundredth time hoping to see the sun peep from amongst the dark heavy clouds. If only the sun came out, Mother perhaps would agree to his going for a quick ride on his bike round the block before she left for the hospital to visit Grandpa.

No chance at all. He shut the window in haste as Mother called out, "Chetan, your cold will get worse if you stand exposed to the cold wind. When will you learn to do what I say?"

Chetan began to sulk. Mother was always cross these days, ever since Grandpa's operation. Poor Grandpa. Chetan missed him so much. He had left home for the hospital two weeks ago and now there was no one to tell him bedtime stories. Father was away on tour and Mother spent most of her time at the hospital tending Grandpa.

Chetan had been to the hospital just once to visit Grandpa. It had not been much of a visit. He was shocked and upset to see him lying there so frail and helpless with several tubes on him. He could not hold back his tears and so Mother had decided not to take Chetan to visit Grandpa till he could sit up and speak. This Saturday Chetan was looking forward to seeing Grandpa, as Mother had agreed to take him but there, he had gone and caught a nasty

cold and that dashed all chances of seeing Grandpa.

Chetan was at a loss. How was he to spend the day? Soon he heard Mother's steps; she was going to leave now. Chetan began to frown and kick his heels.

"You naughty boy, you haven't fed Polly or Goldie and it's half past nine already. Run along now, you should take good care of your pets. I must rush off now. Don't pout, perhaps Grandpa will be home soon. Be a good boy. I've told Ghanshyam to make you a huge bowl of chicken soup. It will make you feel better." Chetan cheered up a little at that and kissed Mother good-bye.

He remembered his mother's words — he had forgotten to feed Polly the parrot and Goldie the goldfish. Chetan was a kind little seven-year-old boy really, but his whole world had turned topsy-turvy ever since Grandpa left and he didn't mean to neglect his pets. He loved all animals and longed to have a dog, but dogs were difficult to maintain in a small flat and Mother said Polly and Goldie should do for the present and he had to be content with them.

"Pretty Polly, Pretty dear,

"Polly wants a mug of beer," screeched the hungry bird as Chetan filled her dish with spinach leaves and a huge ripe red chilli Ghanshyam had thoughtfully saved up.

Next Chetan fed Goldie and sat watching his antics as he swam merrily in the glass bowl. He seemed like a bright ball of fire darting in the water. Goldie was Grandpa's present to Chetan for his seventh birthday. Chetan had found a permanent place on the top-most shelf of the book case next to Mother's favourite Chinese vase.

"Hi! Chetan how are you today?" called out Vivek, as Ghanshyam opened the door. Chetan had not even heard the door bell, musing about the huge aquarium Grandpa had promised to help him build up in course of time.

As he turned round, a squirt of water splashed on his face by way of greeting. That was from Ramesh showing off his brand new water pistol. Chetan bravely wiped his face and took the shot like a good sport. He was used to a lot of bullying from Ramesh and Vivek who called themselves the "Daredevils". Both of them, along with another bosom pal, Suresh, had ganged up and they even had a secret hideout to plan their escapades. Chetan longed to be a member of their exclusive club. The other three, who were twelve years old, considered seven-year-old Chetan a kid and a cry baby and not worthy of being included into such a set of heroes that they were.

All three lived in the same block and came over to Chetan's place occasionally. Today they seemed to have some diabolical plan the way all three trooped in with much glee.

"Chetan, have you seen our new badge? The symbol of 'Daredevils' — isn't it super?" asked Suresh flaunting the badge with its emblem of a light red skull and two ivory coloured bones

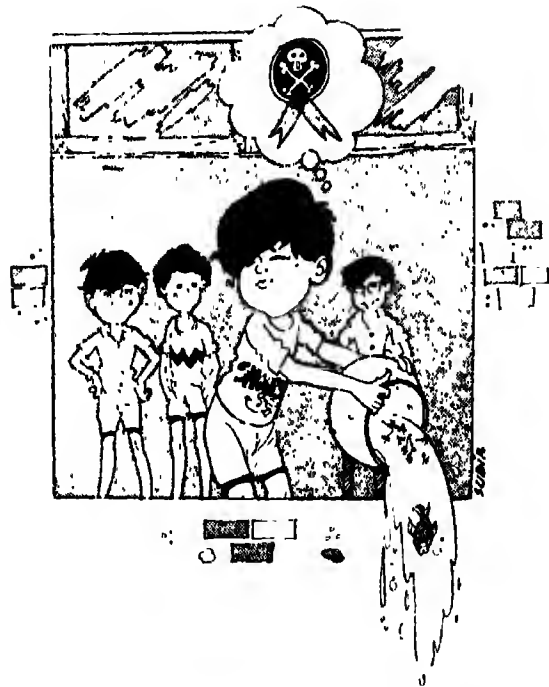
against a jet black background.

Chetan looked at it wistfully. The other three looked at each other, exchanged knowing glances, and winked.

"Why don't you join us?" began Vivek generously. "Hey! have you forgotten our rules of membership?" piped Ramesh.

Meanwhile Suresh was conducting a tour of the living room and examining all the things. He suddenly spun around and challenged, "Chetan, we dare you to take that sissy looking bowl down the shelf and go over to the window and empty its contents. That will prove how daring you can be," said Suresh.

Chetan went pale, but here was his chance to prove himself worthy of being a daredevil. His heart sank at the thought of performing such a wicked act. Poor innocent Goldie! Did he deserve such a fate? There was no time to waste now. Joining the Dare-



devils club was the need of the hour and here was an opportunity literally knocking at his door.

"Oh is that all? I'll do it," said Chetan marching bravely up towards the bookcase. He took the bowl down and made a dash to the window and closing his eyes tightly, emptied it out to the last drop.

The other three cheered and clapped and Chetan felt like a warrior who had just returned home after a brilliant conquest. Suresh pinned a badge on to his shirt and invited him to join them for a meeting later at their hideout. Chetan felt as if he was 12 years old already. The four became chums within the hour and shortly afterwards the three of them left.

No sooner had Chetan shut the door than the doorbell rang again. He rushed to open the door and who should he find but Father himself with Ghanshyam carrying the suitcase.

Chetan was thrilled to see his father after a week. "I've been to the hospital on my way home from the station. Grandpa is much better and he can come home this afternoon, Dr. Mehta says — how's that?"

Chetan was so excited that he did a somersault on the carpet and hugged his father. Today was indeed a lucky day. Such lovely things were happening to him, he thought.

"O.K. So let's have an early lunch and leave to pick up Grandpa and Mum," said Father. At the table Chetan proudly told Father that he had become a member of the Daredevils club and then suddenly his heart sank to the pit of his stomach. Grandpa would be

home today and Goldie's absence would be noticed. Chetan wasn't hungry any more and Ghanshyam's tasty kitchidi and chicken soup suddenly became insipid.

Luckily, Father was busy scanning the mail that had piled up during his absence and so didn't notice Chetan's discomfiture. Chetan rushed through his lunch and ran to the bookcase and taking the empty glass bowl hid it behind the bookcase and darted back to the dining room.

Soon Ghanshyam announced the arrival of the taxi and an unhappy Chetan joined his father. During the drive he just about managed to blink back his tears and look brave.

The reunion with Grandpa made him forget his great sorrow momentarily, but as they drew nearer home, Chetan felt as if a huge herd of elephants were trampling on his chest; he could hardly breathe.

The taxi screeched to a halt and Ghanshyam came running down to carry the luggage and to assist Grandpa. Everybody was engrossed in making Grandpa comfortable and didn't notice Chetan's silence.

After Grandpa had settled down in his favourite armchair by the window, he called Chetan to his side and whispered, "Come on, Chintu, (that was Grandpa's special name for him) out with it — what is this great burden you seem to be carrying — you don't seem to be the same old chatter-box any more. What's the problem?"

Chetan swallowed the lump in his throat and managed a weak smile and emphatically denied having any

problem whatsoever. Then to dispel all doubts, he told Grandpa about the Daredevils and showed him his new badge.

Grandpa didn't seem fully convinced, but Chetan thought he had succeeded. As Grandpa wearily leaned back in his armchair to relax, his eyes fell on the hookcase. Poor Chetan wished the floor would split in two and swallow him up so that he wouldn't have to answer that long dreaded question.

At last the bombshell dropped. "Where is Goldie?" asked Grandpa sitting up. Poor Chetan had had no time to think up any excuse for, since his cruel deed, everything had taken such an unexpected turn: father's arrival, rushing through lunch, and then Grandpa's homecoming.

All he could muster was a weak "I don't know, Grandpa." Now Chetan knew that was a silly answer, but there

was no other alternative. Grandpa became quite alarmed when he saw Chetan's woe begone face desperately blinking back the hot tears which soon came rushing down in torrents.

"Shobha, Sunil . . . what's wrong with Chintu?" Mother and Father came hurrying hearing Grandpa's excited voice. Mother seemed concerned, but Father looked very stern. Within a few moments, Ghanshyam also trooped in hearing the commotion.

"I'll show you what's wrong with Chintu," said Father making some signs to Ghanshyam who left the room immediately. Chetan braved himself to hear what Father was going to say, but to his astonishment he remained silent and only paced up and down the room. Within half a minute, which to Chetan seemed an eternity, Ghanshyam came holding a huge round shape covered with a towel. He deposited this strange thing on the table and



deftly removed the towel with the flourish of a magician and stepped back to reveal the very same glass bowl with the very same dear Goldie swimming merrily inside.

Chetan gasped and rubbed his eyes and stared and stared. Father's stern voice shook him out of his stupor. "Well, young man what have you to say for yourself—is this the way you treat your pet?"

Mother became impatient. "What does Chetan have to explain about Goldie swimming in the bowl? I just don't get this great mystery."

Chetan edged closer to Grandpa and held on to the armchair for support. And then out came the tragic story amidst sobs and splutters. After Chetan said his piece and apologized, Father asked, "Wouldn't you like to know how Goldie got back into his bowl?" Chetan nodded eagerly, now that his heart was lighter and the herd of elephants which had since noon constantly trampled on his chest had all vanished.

"We should all thank good old Ghanshyam here," began Father. "When he came down to close the gate, he noticed the sound of water splashing down from our window and looking up saw what was happening. He acted very fast I must say. Luckily there was a little rusty cheese tin lying nearby. He scooped up poor little Goldie and popped him into the tin and filled the tin with water from Mrs. Singh's garden tap. Poor Goldie must have been quite suffocated for a few moments. I told Ghanshyam to keep quiet about the whole affair as I wanted to get the first explanation from Chetan himself."

"Sahib, I searched the whole house for nearly a whole hour till I found that Chintu baba had hidden the glass bowl behind the bookcase itself!" declared Ghanshyam.

Chetan felt terribly ashamed and hid his face in Grandpa's lap. Good old Grandpa came to his rescue. "Sunil, don't be harsh on Chintu, he's only seven. If only I had been here, this would never have happened. Anyway all's well that ends well, thanks to Ghanshyam. I'm sure Chintu has gone through enough never to repeat such a foolish act again. He told us the truth and owned up like a brave soldier—that's the most important thing, so let's forgive and forget this unpleasant incident."

Everyone cheered up and Father tweaked Chetan's ears affectionately and said, "O.K. you're let off this time!" Chetan carried Goldie's bowl lovingly and restored him to his original place on the bookcase.

Grandpa reminded him about the 'meeting' he had to attend; it was quarter to six already. Mother agreed after a little persuasion from Grandpa.

"Don't be long, we're having an early dinner tonight, Grandpa is tired," she called out as Chetan ran to get ready.

He gave Grandpa a great bear hug, raced downstairs, jumped on to his bike and rode out to meet the Dare-devils. Thank God for inventing Grandpa, he thought. With Grandpa back home, everything would be super for him as it always had been so far.

Lalita Nayar



## TALES FOR CHILDREN

# the Siren Hound

"THE TROUBLE WITH YOU, OLD GROANER, IS YOU HOWL LIKE A SIREN," SAID THE MAYOR'S DAUGHTER, FRANCES, WHO WAS ALSO OLD GROANER'S BEST FRIEND



"HOLY HOMINY," SAID OLD GROANER, A SAD FACED BLACK-AND-TAN COONHOUND, "I ONLY DO THAT WHEN I CAN'T FIND YOU SO THEN YOU CAN FIND ME"



"EXACTLY," SAID FRANCES, "AND SOMEDAY YOU'LL GET US INTO TROUBLE MAKING ALL THAT NOISE. COME ON, LET'S GO HOME FOR LUNCH"

OUTSIDE THEY BECAME SEPARATED IN THE NOON CROWDS. "HOLY HOMINY," SAID OLD GROANER HE RAISED HIS VOICE AND HOWLED LIKE A SIREN.



ALL THE CARS PULLED OVER TO THE CURB "MUST BE AN AMBULANCE," SAID THE POLICEMAN HE BLEW HIS WHISTLE EVERYONE STOPPED



"DING-BUST-IT," MUTTERED THE MAYOR, "THE AIR-RAID SIREN HAS GONE OFF TOO SOON" AND ZOOM, HE RUSHED OUT AND PUSHED THE 'OFF' BUTTON



BUT FRANCES KNEW IT WAS OLD GROANER. "HERE I AM, OVER BY THE DRUGSTORE," SHE CALLED



OLD GROANER RAN ACROSS THE STREET WHILE THE TRAFFIC WAS ALL STOPPED. "OH PIFFLE," HE SAID "WHY'D YOU GO OFF AND LEAVE ME, FRANCES?"



THE POLICEMAN RAN OVER, HAVING HIS ARMS "THERE'S GOING TO BE TROUBLE IF THAT COONHOUND DOESN'T STOP HOWLING LIKE A SIREN"

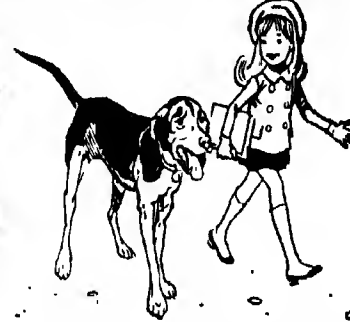


STORY BY PATRICIA BOYD ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK ZAPPALÀ

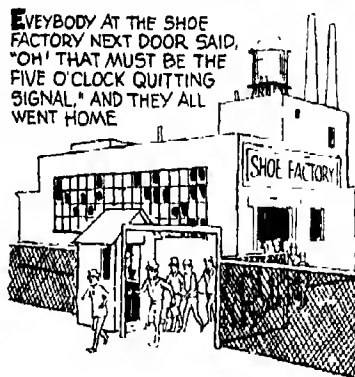


"THERE'S GOING TO BE TROUBLE IF THAT COONHOUND DOESN'T STOP HOWLING LIKE A SIREN," SAID THE POLICEMAN. HE BLEW HIS WHISTLE FOR THE TRAFFIC TO GO.

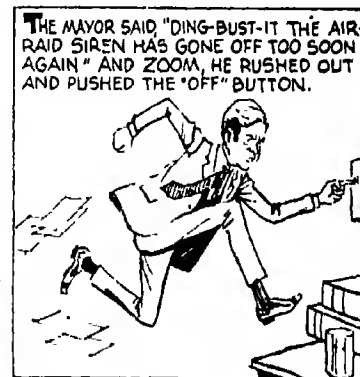
AFTER LUNCH FRANCES SAID, "LET'S GO DOWN TO THE ICE SKATING RINK." OLD GROANER SAID, "OK, YOU SKATE AND I'LL WATCH."



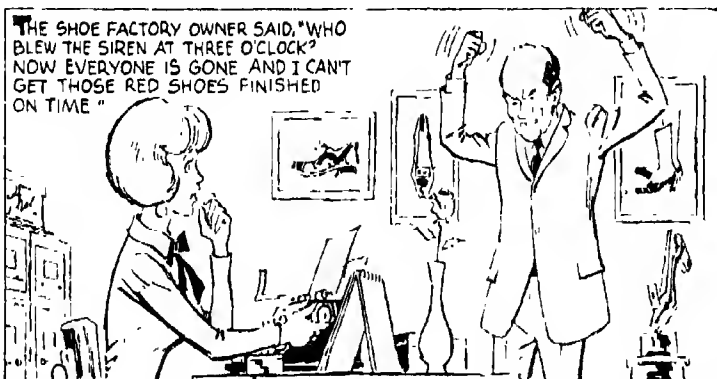
BUT PRETTY SOON OLD GROANER STARTED TALKING TO A FRIENDLY DACHSHUND WHEN HE LOOKED AGAIN FRANCES WAS GONE. "HOLY HOMINY," HE SAID AND RAISED HIS VOICE AND HOWLED LIKE A SIREN.



EVERYBODY AT THE SHOE FACTORY NEXT DOOR SAID, "OH! THAT MUST BE THE FIVE O'CLOCK QUITTING SIGNAL," AND THEY ALL WENT HOME.



THE MAYOR SAID, "DING-BUST-IT THE AIR-RAID SIREN HAS GONE OFF TOO SOON AGAIN." AND ZOOM, HE RUSHED OUT AND PUSHED THE "OFF" BUTTON.



THE SHOE FACTORY OWNER SAID, "WHO BLEW THE SIREN AT THREE O'CLOCK? NOW EVERYONE IS GONE AND I CAN'T GET THOSE RED SHOES FINISHED ON TIME."



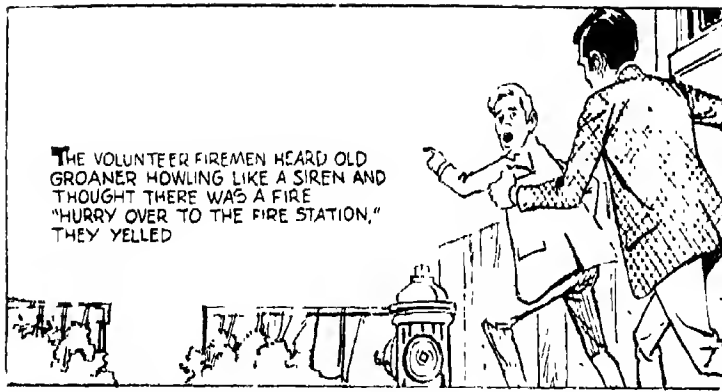
FRANCES TOOK OLD GROANER AND WENT OVER TO THE PARK. "WE HAVE TO UP AND DO SOMETHING," SHE SAID, BUT OLD GROANER FELL ASLEEP.



OLD GROANER DREAMED FRANCES WAS GONE AND MUTTERED IN HIS SLEEP, "HOLY HOMINY," AND RAISED HIS VOICE AND HOWLED LIKE A SIREN.



THE VOLUNTEER FIREMEN HEARD OLD GROANER AND THOUGHT THERE WAS A FIRE. "HURRY," THEY YELLED, "GET TO THE FIRE STATION."

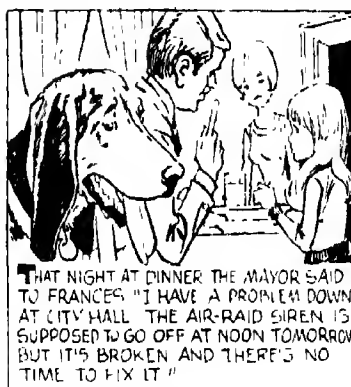


THE VOLUNTEER FIREMEN HEARD OLD GROANER HOWLING LIKE A SIREN AND THOUGHT THERE WAS A FIRE. "HURRY OVER TO THE FIRE STATION," THEY YELLED

THE MAYOR SAID "DING-BUST IT. THE AIR-RAID SIREN HAS GONE OFF AGAIN" AND ZOOM— HE RUSHED OUT AND PUSHED THE "OFF" BUTTON BUT OLD GROANER WAS STILL HOWLING

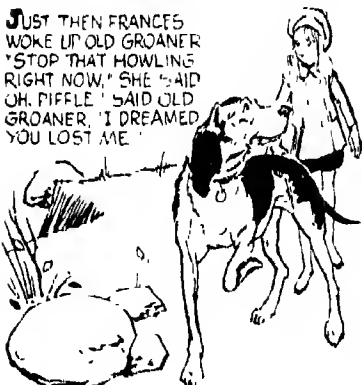


THE MAYOR BECAME SO EXCITED HE GRABBED A HAMMER AND SMASHED THE AIR-RAID SIREN TO SILENCE IT



THAT NIGHT AT DINNER THE MAYOR SAID TO FRANCES "I HAVE A PROMISE DOWN AT CITY HALL. THE AIR-RAID SIREN IS SUPPOSED TO GO OFF AT NOON TOMORROW BUT IT'S BROKEN AND THERE'S NO TIME TO FIX IT."

ALL THE PEOPLE SET THEIR WATCHES BY THE WEDNESDAY NOON SIREN. SAID FRANCES "WE'LL HAVE TO FIGURE OUT SOMETHING." SHE STARTED TO THINK



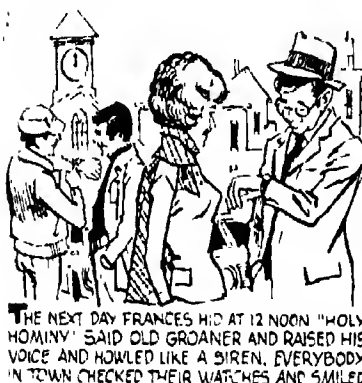
JUST THEN FRANCES WOKE UP OLD GROANER. "STOP THAT HOWLING RIGHT NOW," SHE SAID. "OH, PIFFLE," SAID OLD GROANER. "I DREAMED YOU LOST ME."



THE FIRE CHIEF SAW THE FIREMEN PUTTING ON THEIR BOOTS AND FIRE HATS. "WAIT," HE SAID. "I DIDN'T TURN THE SIREN ON. THERE'S NO FIRE. GO BACK TO YOUR JOBS."



"I KNOW," SHE CRIED. "OLD GROANER CAN BE THE SIREN. I'LL HIDE FROM HIM AT 12 NOON AND HE'LL HOWL LIKE A SIREN." "I HOPE IT WORKS," SAID THE MAYOR.

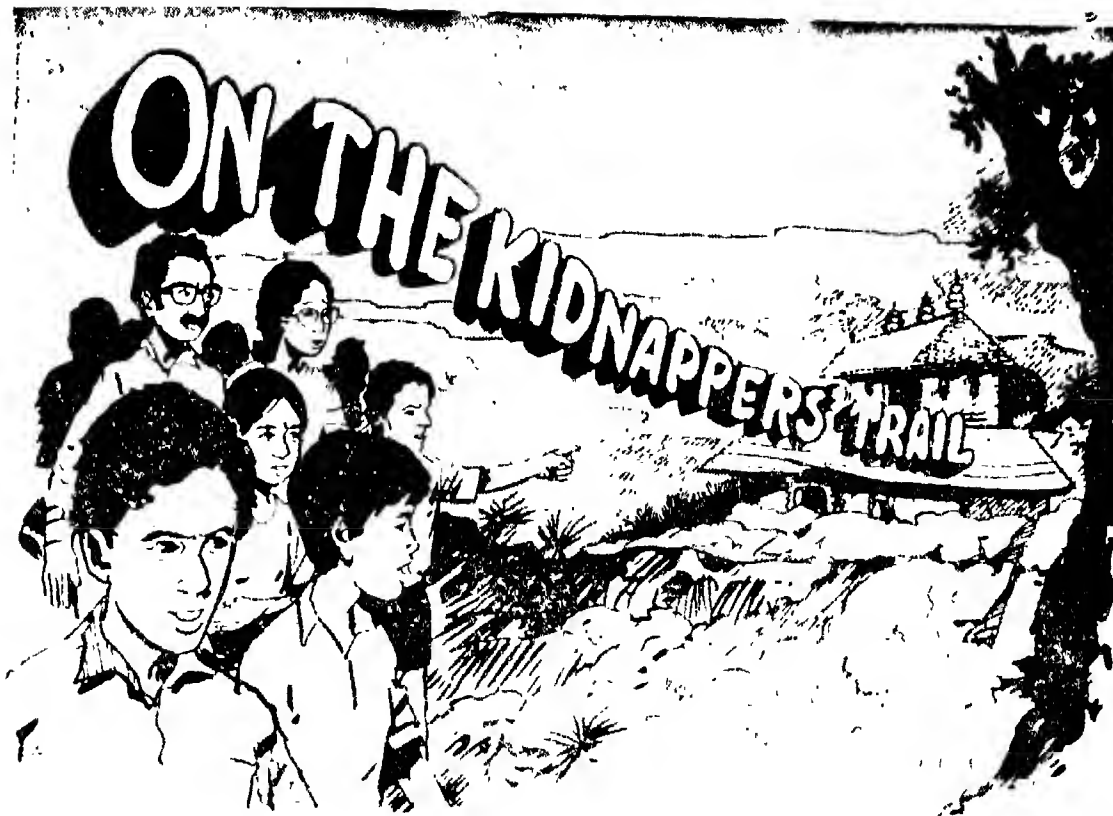


THE NEXT DAY FRANCES HID AT 12 NOON. "HOLY HOMINY," SAID OLD GROANER AND RAISED HIS VOICE AND HOWLED LIKE A SIREN. EVERYBODY IN TOWN CHECKED THEIR WATCHES AND SMILED



THE MAYOR SAID "YOU DID SUCH A GOOD JOB, OLD GROANER. I WON'T BOTHER TO GET THE SIREN FIXED. YOU CAN BE THE WORLD'S ONLY AIR-RAID SIREN." OLD GROANER WAS PLEASED AND PROUD TO ACCEPT

(Asia Features)



### THE STORY SO FAR

Examinations over, Biju, Pratap, and 'Police' Appu (a nickname he has earned for his daredevil acts), and their friends remind their master of his promise of a picnic. Mr. Rajasekhar agrees to take them to the ancient Koickal Palace. Their teacher, Sarada, joins them. The whole morning they go round the monument, listening to Rajasekhar's description of the place. After lunch and rest in the park, the children are allowed to roam in the garden. Appu, Pratap, Biju, and John stray into the nearby forest and have a good view of the Kali Hills. Pratap has some fearful stories to tell them about the temple and the deity there. When people even turn away their eyes from the hills. Appu declares his intention to go up the dreaded place, some day. That very day, fear and anxiety grip the children when they find that one among them is missing — little Vinita. A thorough search all over the place is in vain and the children and their two

teachers return to the village and inform the headmaster, the police, and Vinita's mother, Mrs. Panicker.

The next morning Appu, Biju, and Pratap set out on their own for the Palace, where they meet Shankar the guard, who tells them about the Maharajah's chamber now out of bounds for anyone, he himself being no exception. The boys try to listen to the conversation between Shankar and his friend Anand 'Sahel' who, according to the nearby teashop owner, is a frequent visitor to the Palace. As they comb the area for Vinita, they come upon a blood-smeared handkerchief. Before they leave the Palace, they curiously watch Shankar emerging from the Maharajah's chamber!

The three friends find themselves the next morning with the Panickers and the Superintendent of Police, Mr. Khan. Mr. Panicker, a Customs official in Bombay, nar-

rates how one of a gang of antique smugglers, called Reddy, had fallen into their net. They realise that Vinita's disappearance has a "Reddy connection" for, a note dropped into Mr. Khan's car reads: "You release Reddy, we release Vinita".

On their way home, the boys are accosted by the proprietor of a studio, who gives them some photos taken by Rajasckhar at their picnic, to be handed to their teacher. One of them shows Vinita running after a butterfly and followed by a bearded man. The boys recognise him. It is Anand! This is some clue which they wish to pass on to Mr. Panicker and Mr. Khan. They are away at the Palace, says Mrs. Panicker. Off they go to the Palace where the boys miss them once again. Rain prevents them from going home, so they stick around and are rewarded with

an open door to the Maharajah's chamber. They avoid being seen by Shankar, Anand, and a stranger, carrying a strangely-looking packet which Shankar keeps inside an almirah near the entrance.

When the door is closed behind them, the boys start on their probe which soon leads them to a dark tunnel. Suddenly, Pratap can see Appu's head in a silhouette. Pratap has his eyes fixed on the house. He stumbles on a rock and hurts his toe. He says he will rest for a while and prompts the other two to proceed. The house is not a deserted place, as Appu and Biju find to their surprise and dismay. Two ruffians there recognise the boys for, they had seen them at the Panickers' house. "They must be friends of that little girl," says one of them and pushes them into a room. Is Vinita, too, a captive there?

## CHAPTER 9 : More in the "Missing" List

IT was dark by the time Mr. Panicker returned home accompanied by Mr. Khan. Some people were still there eager to know the latest developments. Half-a-dozen policemen were also waiting in the compound.

A 10-year-old boy stood in a corner, surrounded by policemen. He was wearing shorts and had no shirt on; he looked lean. Fear was writ large on his face. He shifted his eyes from one policeman to another.

As soon as he saw Mr. Khan, a Sub-Inspector moved forward and saluted him.

"Did you get any clue?" Mr. Khan asked him.

"No, sir, we couldn't find anything suspicious at the Palace."

"I see!" said Mr. Khan. "Any other development?"

"Yes, sir, we traced the boy who had put that slip inside your car." The Sub-Inspector pointed towards the boy in the corner.

"Bring him to me," Mr. Khan ordered as

he went inside the house. The boy was presented before him and Mr. Panicker. A policeman held him firmly by his arm. He was trembling from head to foot.

"Who gave you that letter?" Mr. Khan asked the boy.

"Sir, sir... I... I..." The boy could not proceed as tears choked his voice.

"You leave him alone and wait outside," Mr. Khan ordered the policeman. He then patted the boy and said in a soft tone, "Don't be afraid. We won't hurt you. Just tell us the truth."

The boy soon calmed down. Meanwhile, Mrs. Panicker came in with tea and biscuits. She offered a cup to the boy, too.

"Sit down and take your tea. Then you can tell us your story," said Mr. Panicker encouragingly.

"My name is Ramachandran," began the boy, now comfortable and confident. "Everybody calls me Ramu. My house is about two miles from here. Every day I come to

the market here to do odd jobs, like fetching tea, taking things from one place to another. I manage to earn about two or three rupees, and then I go home and give the money to my mother." He stopped for a while to regain his breath.

"Tell us what happened this morning," said Mr. Khan.

"I was waiting in front of the ration shop when two men called me. I went to them, and they asked me whether I could drop a slip of paper in the blue car parked in front of this house. They said they would give me five rupees if I did the job without being noticed. I took the slip, came here, and dropped it in the car before anybody could see me. I went back to the two men who were waiting in a car there. When I

said I had done the job, they gave me a five-rupee note and drove away."

"Can you describe the two men?" asked Mr. Panicker.

"One of them was a big man with a huge moustache. He was wearing white trousers and a blue shirt. He was driving the car. It was he who gave me the slip of paper and the money. The other had very short hair and was wearing a grey dress. His trousers and shirt seemed to be made of the same cloth."

"Ramu, will you be able to identify them if you saw them again?" asked Mr. Khan.

"Yes sir," answered Ramu. By now he was speaking confidently. "I remember their face distinctly. I'll be able to recognise them any time."





"And what about their car? Do you remember its number?"

"No sir, but it was a small black car. And sir", Ramu added after a moment, "here's the five rupees they gave me." He took out a note from his pocket and offered it to Mr. Khan.

"You can keep it, Ramu. Now you may go home." Mr. Khan called a policeman and said, "You take him to his house. Treat him well."

The policeman saluted, and went out accompanied by the boy.

Mr. Panicker and Mr. Khan were still talking about various possibilities when Pratap's father and Biju's elder brother walked in. "Excuse me, Mr. Panicker," said Pratap's father, "is my son here? So also Biju or Appu?"

"They were here till about lunch-time. I haven't seen them after that. Why, what's the matter?" asked Mr. Panicker.

"None of them has returned home yet. We checked with Appu's mother. She is also worried."

"Now, where could they have gone? All the three were here till lunch-time," added

Mr. Khan.

"Yes," said Biju's brother, "they came home, ate their lunch, and went out again. After that nobody seems to have seen them."

"We just wanted to see whether they were here," said Pratap's father. "We'll go out and look for them."

Mrs. Panicker, who was at the doorstep listening to the conversation, turned to her husband. "All three of them came back here in the afternoon, looking for you. They looked as if they had something to tell you. I told them that you all had gone to the Palace."

The news that the boys were missing created a flutter among everybody. What was going on? Just two days ago, a girl had disappeared rather mysteriously. And now, these three boys!

Mr. Khan got up from his seat. "Panicker, if this is true, then we have to press more men into the job. We'll have to order a thorough search of the whole area. Of course, I don't mean Vinita's disappearance itself is a simple matter. Not any longer after we got that note from Reddy's gang. But I thought we could handle this quietly. Now, I think, an open search is called for."

"No, Khan," said Mr. Panicker thoughtfully, "I don't think the boys have disappeared. They are in the habit of going on small adventure trips. They are known for that. Of course, they don't usually stay away from home after dusk without permission. Probably, they are held up somewhere because of the rain or maybe their bus is delayed."

This pacified Mr. Khan a little. Still he asked the Sub-Inspector and some policemen to go out and make thorough enquiries.

Late in the night, the policemen returned to report that the boys had not yet reached home. They had not been seen anywhere. By now the whole village was out in the streets looking for the missing children.

**Radhakrishnan**

*(To be concluded)*

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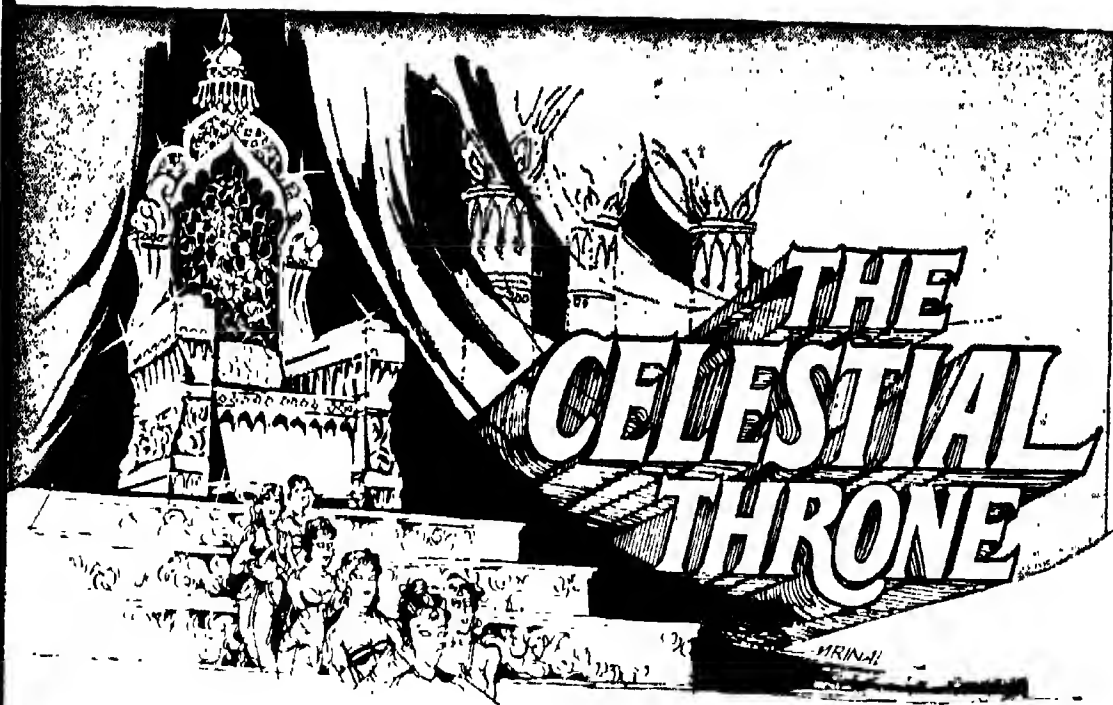
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**T**HE next doll stopped King Bhoja and said, "Bhojaraj, have you any idea how brave King Vikramaditya was?"

"Aren't all kings brave?" asked Bhoja. "But tell me, what was special about Vikramaditya?"

"King Vikramaditya never thought anything of facing the most dangerous kinds of challenges," said the doll. "He was not afraid of anything under the sun. There was in his court a young man named Kamalakar, who was a great traveller. Once, when visiting Kanchinagar, Kamalakar heard of a strange phenomenon. There was a beautiful girl in the city named Mohini. She had several suitors. But whoever visited her died the next day. People were under the impression that they were killed, by some demon but no one was brave enough to fight the demon and win Mohini.

"Kamalakar saw Mohini and was charmed by her looks, but he too was

not brave enough to put his life in danger to go and propose to her. He told Vikramaditya about it, and he insisted on visiting Mohini to find out things for himself. 'But you can't put your life in danger for my sake, Sire!' cried Kamalakar. 'Every single person who stepped into her house so far had been found dead the next morning.'

"Only cowards are afraid of facing a challenge," said Vikramaditya, smiling. 'Don't worry about me. I shall be all right.'

"Kamalakar accompanied the king to Kanchinagar. They called on Mohini together. Even Vikramaditya was amazed by her beauty. Mohini begged them to be her guests and they readily agreed. But Vikramaditya refused to eat anything, saying he was not at all hungry. He merely lay in bed, pretending to be asleep.

"Gradually everyone in the house fell asleep. Long after midnight, the demon crept into Mohini's room. Seeing her

asleep, he made for the guest room where Vikramaditya and Kamalakar were sleeping. The lamp burnt low. The demon made for them, but Vikramaditya was ready with his sword and killed him in no time. The demon gave a piercing scream which awoke the entire household. Mohini rushed in, trembling with fear. When she saw the dead body of the demon, she cried with relief and

fell at Vikramaditya's feet. 'You have saved me from utter misery and given me a new lease of life by killing this demon. Please let me serve you for the rest of my life.'

"King Vikramaditya smiled and looked at Kamalakar. Then he looked at Mohini and said, 'I'll be happier if you serve this young man instead, as he wishes to marry you.' He got them married and returned to his kingdom."

"I can tell you a similar story," said the next doll. "It is about a beautiful woman whom a demon beat up every night. The villagers heard her screaming for help and they also saw him lash-



ing her with a whip, but no one was brave enough to confront the demon until Purandar, a young man, went and reported it to Vikramaditya.

"Vikramaditya went to rescue the woman, whereupon the demon challenged him to a duel. It was a tough

fight, because the demon had superhuman powers, but Vikramaditya succeeded in defeating him, at last. He married the woman to Purandar, and they both lived happily ever after."

"Vikramaditya felt," said the next doll, "that anyone who asked for anything had the right to receive it, provided it was a fair request. Once he was hunting in the forest, when a young brahmachari saw him. He was a fraud and had no real spiritual inclinations. So he decided to play a trick on the king. 'Sire,' he said, addressing him, 'I've been meditating here for the last few years. The goddess has just appeared before me and said that I should get married now and have a small kingdom of my own. She has commanded me to ask you for it. Won't you respect the divine command?'"

"The king saw through him at once and realised that he was merely bluffing. But he said, 'It's a king's duty to provide for his needy subjects, especially if anyone asks for something. You've made a meagre request, and I've a great deal. So take it, even though you are a liar!' The king gave him the city of Ambikapur as well as a lot of money for maintaining it. Could you have done anything, like that Bhojaraj?"

"Let me tell you yet another story of Vikramaditya's bravery," said yet another doll. "You already know that he enjoyed visiting far away places. Once he went to a temple by the side of a wide, turbulent river. The current was so strong that the king was barely able to take a dip. He then sat on the steps along with the crowd, listening to the priest. He was speaking on nobility."



'There are various kinds of nobility,' he said. 'The man who gives away things to the needy is noble no doubt, but the one who risks his own life to save that of another is the noblest of all.'

"Just then there was a cry from the river. An old man crossing the river with his wife had upset the little boat and had fallen in. The crowd stood on the shore watching them, but no one was brave enough to go to their rescue. Vikramaditya jumped in and, though he very nearly got swept away in the current, he managed to save them both. He lay on the shore, exhausted. The old man bent over him, 'I don't know who you are, but I offer you the consequences of all my good deeds and meditations, because you have saved our lives. They're enough to give you every happiness in the life hereafter'.

"The moment Vikramaditya got up, another man approached him. 'Sir,' he said, 'I could not help hearing what the old man said. I'm very unhappy. Could you spare me some of what he has offered you?'

"Take it all and more', said Vikramaditya, 'and be happy.'"

The doll turned to King Bhoja. "What do you think of the great Vikramaditya?" the doll asked him with an arch smile. "Do you feel you are equal to him?"

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*(Continued from page 9)*

walked up to him and took the lamp and bell from his hands — confidently. 'How sad,' thought Pandurang, 'that I cannot hug you now, my son, and hold you close to my heart! But there'll be time for that, plenty of time ...'

Bandu led the aarti in his sweet gentle voice that cracked from time to time; it was mellow and soft now, and gruff and timeless then. But he sang up to the last note when the bells pealed and the petals were showered on the goddess.

Pandurang stood beside him and handed him the 'thaali' with the 'prasad'. Smilingly — for the first time, a real smile — Bandu distributed prasad to the congregation, as fire-works lit up the sky outside. Then, tired and happy, he and Pandurang turned towards home. Eager hands grabbed them and stuffed them with laddoos, karanjis, and chaklis.

"Bandubhau," whispered Tara, "Bandubhan (brother), please come to my house tomorrow for Bhaubaaj (Bhaiya dooj)."

"Humh!" gasped Bandu and, recovering quickly, said, "Yes, of course, Tara."

Pandurang guided him out of the crowd of eager children. Once out of the crowd, he did not take his friendly, warm, reassuring arm off the young shoulders.

The house was dark. Except for the one large brass lamp that burnt before a photograph on a 'chamang'. Bandu had lit it before he had left for the temple. It was the only glow from their house on Diwali day.

And it was the only glow that mattered to them, thought Pandurang and Bandu, as they stood before her picture. She had given them each other. "Aai", said Bandu aloud, "you gave me Diwali, you gave me my father!"

Vaijayanti Tonpe



(Continued from page 11)

in films, and waited for the first broken sentences. They came, soon enough.

"That pestering menace," he growled. "That prying, poking, pinching, horrid girl," he said. "That porcupine, that alligator, that. . ."

"All right, all right, what about her?" I asked.

"She — is — going — to — tell — my — mother — that — I — should — not — be — given — any — sweets — for — Dussehra," he said, brokenly.

"She won't," I said. "She daren't. And anyway, you think your mother will listen to her?"

"Oh, my mother won't let me starve," he said bitterly. "I'll get my share. But you know that's not enough."

Not enough! I should think so. When it comes to eating sweets, Raghni is Co. Unlimited. So I put on my best doctoral manner and said, "It may be good for you. Less sugar intake, you know"

"Shut up!" he yelled "Your brain output is less than nothing. And your. . ."

I walked off before I could hear any more . . .

Oh well, cooks and broths, I said didn't I? But I can hear my mother calling and I think that's the tailor with my new clothes.

So wait, will you, for the next chapter of "this most interesting and exhilarating, most informative and most tender of this superbly evocative novel the like of which. . . ."

(Which, my dear kitchens, is a lot of hot air).

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# SCIENCE SPOT

## HOW YOU BALANCE ON YOUR EARS

ONE of the most exciting things at a circus is watching one of those intrepid artistes who balances on a high wire, sometimes while riding a bicycle.

Equally marvellous to most of us, who wouldn't stand on the top of a step-ladder for any length of time and feel happy, are the fellows who go careering around on one-wheeled cycles, with seats six feet above the ground.

Yet, it's all a matter of canals—not the kind you travel on, but the semi-circular ones inside your ears.

Most of us think of our ears as the organs by which we receive sounds. But in anatomically historical terms, the original and main purpose of the ear is as an organ of balance—as, indeed, it still is in some forms of creatures, such as fishes.

Your ear is in three parts. The outer ear is the bit you see on the surface, and its main purpose is to collect the sound waves and direct them inwards.

Your middle ear contains a series of bony structures—called, from their shapes, the hammer, anvil, and stirrup. They transmit the sound to the real heart of the matter, the inner ear. This is the part that translates the sound waves into electrical messages which are then relayed to the brain. It will still give us some form of hearing even if the middle and outer ear are destroyed.

The inner ear consists of a compli-

cated mass of tubes and chambers which are known as the labyrinth. They are set in a mass of solid bone, one of the hardest bones in the body. The part concerned with hearing is shaped rather like a snail shell, and is called the cochlea.

Opposite the cochlea are three looped tubes, set roughly at right angles to one another to form loops in three dimensions. These are called the semi-circular canals and are filled with liquid.

From the walls of the canals grow fine hairs which are connected by nerves to another part of the brain.

When you turn your head, the canals turn with it. But the liquid in them has a tendency to stay put. You can see the same phenomenon if you turn a cup of tea round suddenly—the cup moves, the tea stays almost still.

As the head moves, therefore, the liquid seems to surge about inside the canals (really, the canals surge about round the liquid).

The movement causes the liquid to move the little hairs, and a mass of messages is sent to the brain, telling it that the head has moved, and in which direction.

If you watch one of those circus acrobats doing his balancing act, you'll see that he keeps his head very still. In this way, he can judge the slightest movement of his body and move to compensate it.

But don't assume that because he

can do it, you, too, can. The ability to balance isn't the same for everybody—that's why some of us get sick at sea on a swaying ship, while others balance happily through the roughest storm.

Diseases of the ear can lead to vertigo and dizziness, because they upset the delicate mechanism of balance. Fortunately, they're reasonably rare, and in most cases can be readily cured.

One of the effects of over-consumption of alcohol is dizziness; that's because the drug has acted on the semi-circular canals, causing a temporary loss of control.

But provided you don't try to walk while the room is in motion, you'll soon be all right!

(First Features)

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## UN Essay Contest Results !

**I**N the UN Essay Contest (see *Children's World*, September 1983) sponsored by the United Nations for the UN Postal Administration (UNPA), in collaboration with the Children's Book Trust, the following children have been named the prizewinners:

**FIRST PRIZE:** Miss Swati Ghosh, of Springdales School, New Delhi (Subject: What United Nations means to me)

**SECOND PRIZE:** Miss Jija Shelley, of LMS Higher Secondary School for Girls, Neyyoor, Kanyakumari Dt, Tamilnadu (Subject: The effect of food production and population growth on the world)

**THIRD PRIZE:** Miss Paromita Vohra, of Bal Bharati Air Force School, New Delhi (Subject: What United Nations means to me)

The jury comprised Ms. Modhumita Mojumdar, journalist, Mrs. Pratibha Nath, author of children's books, Mrs. Ambika Sengupta, Lecturer in English and writer for children, Mr. F. Chakravarty, of the UN Information Centre, New Delhi, and Mr. K. Ramakrishnan, Editor, *CHILDREN'S WORLD*, besides Mrs. Navkala Roy and Mrs. Navin Menon, of the Editorial Department of the Children's Book Trust.

To all the three prizewinners, our heartiest congratulations! Their prize-winning essays will be published in our December and January issues, along with a pictorial feature on the United Nations.



**T**HE weaver bird (local names: Hindi, Baya; Bengali, Babui), commonly known as the "bottle bird", is a dumpy, sparrow-like bird which, in breeding plumage, has its forehead to nape and breast a golden-yellow; face, chin and throat a blackish brown; upperparts a speckled brown and yellow; and rump and lower parts a pale fulvous.

The Baya is found throughout India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Burma, and the Indo-Chinese sub-region. This crafty bird must rank as

the mightiest and most industrious nest-builder among all the birds.

What is striking about this bird is that the male is responsible for building the nests. Several male birds unite and undertake the work of nest building as a colony of their own. Nesting begins from June, but serious nesting begins with the onset of rains in July and continues till September. Males work from dawn to dusk, seven days a week. They select the nesting sites not only on thorny 'kikkar' and palm-trees, but also on thatched roofs, telegraph and power lines, and on the sides of wells.

They sally forth hundreds of times to tall-grass clumps that are within about 200 yards of the 'construction' site, nip off pieces of tough green grass, sometimes even over a foot in length. These pieces are brought trailing behind the builder, who perches on the site and expertly and tidily weaves the grass-pieces into the anchored nest. He works in a manner similar to a cobbler patching a shoe.

At the end of the breeding season, August-September, a colony may have nests raging from 30 to 40. Some of them also have two or three storeys. The females stay completely away and are not seen in the vicinity. But when the nests are half complete, the females suddenly descend on the scene and proceed to inspect the apartments on which the males have been working so hard.

Often the female emerges from the nest dissatisfied, goes to another nest and continues her inspection. She inspects all nests available for occupation, thereby assessing the competence of the males. It is strange that, though she is unable to weave even a single fibre of the nest, she can judge and

select the best nest that will withstand pouring rain and strong winds.

When she is ready for mating, her aim is to select the future home. Each "bachelor" weaves a nest halfway and waits for a female to select him as her mate. The nest is completed only if the female approves of it. After she conveys her approval to the builder, from then on the two birds stay together. After making some internal furnishings, she lays two to four eggs. The female alone incubates and while she is busy brooding the eggs, the male sets about to build another nest, entice another female and rear another family.

When the young ones begin to chirp in the nests, the father birds occasionally perch outside the nests and listen happily to their young ones. At times, when the mother bird is out hunting for food, father visits the children to have a look at them, but never to bring them a morsel. That is done by the wife only.

Since the interior of the nest is totally dark, the Baya exhibits his skill in 'electrical' operations. He catches hold of a number of fireflies, fixes up each one of them to the woven lining of the interior, and dwells in one of the best illuminated houses in the world of birds!

The first nest gets deserted within a month, from the day the male leaves his first mate, for the fledgling also leave the nest by then. The male still has territorial control over the first nest and he quickly seals off its tubular entrance and weaves a new one beneath it. It may be noted that the female Baya never accepts and lives in an already used nest.

The new nest, too, is occupied by another hen. The male gets back to the second nest for building another one

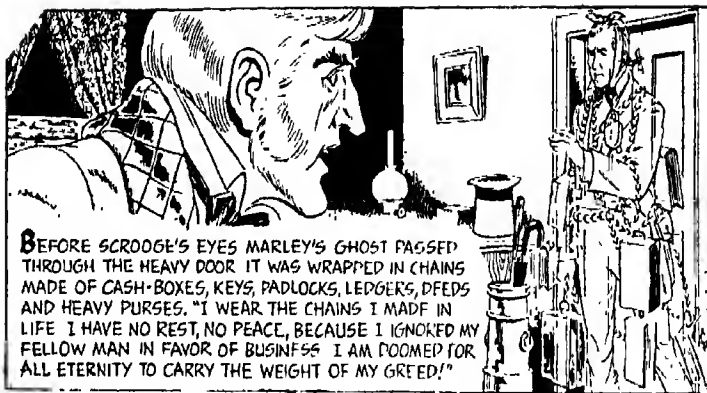


underneath it, if it is already empty, or he may select a new site for the same purpose. When this nest also is occupied by another hen, he returns to his first nest to make a third storey for the fifth mate.

During one breeding season, the male weaver bird, a master craftsman, can have as many as five wives!

Farmers very often destroy nests of weaver birds, because these birds do a good deal of damage to certain crops. It is a pity that agriculturists do not realise that the nestlings are fed on caterpillars, grasshoppers, and various types of insects which might do a greater damage to his crops than the birds themselves.

U.C. Chopra



BEFORE SCROOGE'S EYES MARLEY'S GHOST PASSED THROUGH THE HEAVY DOOR. IT WAS WRAPPED IN CHAINS MADE OF CASH-BOXES, KEYS, PADLOCKS, LEDGERS, DEEDS AND HEAVY PURSES. "I WEAR THE CHAINS I MADE IN LIFE. I HAVE NO REST, NO PEACE, BECAUSE I KNOKED MY FELLOW MAN IN FAVOR OF BUSINESS. I AM DOOMED FOR ALL ETERNITY TO CARRY THE WEIGHT OF MY GREED!"

"JUST AS YOU, SCROOGE," SAID THE GHOST, "I NEVER DID A KIND OR GENEROUS ACT FOR MANKIND. HEAR ME! MY TIME IS NEARLY GONE! YOU STILL HAVE A CHANCE OF ESCAPING MY FATE!"



"YOU WILL BE HAUNTED BY THREE SPIRITS," RESUMED THE GHOST. "EXPECT THE FIRST WHEN THE BELL TOLLS ONE! LOOK TO SEE ME NO MORE!"



"FOR YOUR OWN SAKE," CRIED THE GHOST, "REMEMBER WHAT HAS PASSED BETWEEN US! THERE IS STILL HOPE, EBENEZER. " WITH THAT THE APPARITION DISAPPEARED THROUGH THE WINDOW AND INTO THE FOG.



FRIGHTENED, SCROOGE WENT TO BED, WITHOUT UNDESSING AND FELL ASLEEP. THEN, AS THE CLOCK STRUCK A DULL, HOLLOW, MELANCHOLY ONE, AN UNEARTHLY VISITOR AWAKENED HIM. IT WAS THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PAST!



WITH A TOUCH OF THE GHOST'S HAND UPON SCROOGE'S HEART, THEY PASSED THROUGH THE WALL OF THE BUILDING, AND FOUND THEMSELVES UPON AN OPEN COUNTRY ROAD. THE CITY HAD VANISHED. "GOOD HEAVEN!" SAID SCROOGE, "I WAS A BOY HERE!"



WITH THE GHOST AT HIS SIDE, SCROOGE RELIVED HIS CHILDHOOD. HE COULD SEE OTHER CHILDREN FILLED WITH GLADNESS, WHILE HE STOOD SOLITARY AND ALONE. "I WISH," HE SORROWED, "THAT IT ALL COULD HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT... BUT IT'S TOO LATE NOW!"



"LEAVE ME BE! TAKE ME BACK! HAUNT ME NO MORE!" SCROOGE CRIED WITH AGONY AS HE VIEWED HIS PAST, EXHAUSTED, OVERCOME BY DROWSINESS, HE REELLED INTO BED, AND SANK INTO A HEAVY SLEEP.



AWAKING IN THE MIDDLE OF A SNORE, SCROOGE SAW THE SECOND SPIRIT, IT WAS THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT!



A WEIRD TRANSFORMATION TOOK PLACE, AND SCROOGE FOUND HIMSELF ACCOMPANYING THE GHOST TO THE HOME OF HIS POOR CLERK, BOB CRATCHIT. THEY WATCH, AS BOB, WHO ONLY GETS A SHILLING A WEEK WORKING FOR SCROOGE, IS HAVING A JOYOUS CHRISTMAS DINNER WITH HIS HAPPY FAMILY.





SLOWLY, GRAVELY, SILENTLY, THE THIRD SPIRIT APPROACHED SCROOGE. SHROUDED IN BLACK, WITH NOTHING VISIBLE EXCEPT ONE WHITE HAND, THE MYSTERIOUS PRESENCE FILLED SCROOGE WITH A SOLENN DREAD. "GHOST OF CHRISTMAS YET IT COME!" HE EXCLAIMED, "I FEAR YOU MORE THAN ANY SPECTRE I HAVE SEEN!"

THE PHANTOM TOOK SCROOGE TO THE GRAVE OF HIS FUTURE AND THEY OBSERVED NO MOURNERS. "IT'S LIKELY TO BE A VERY CHEAP FUNERAL," SAID A VOICE, "I DON'T KNOW OF ANYBODY WHO WOULD GO TO IT!"



NEXT, SCROOGE AND THE SPIRIT CAME INTO THE PRESENCE OF HIS LANDLADY, UNDERTAKER AND SECOND HAND DEALER PILFERING AND FIGHTING OVER HIS PERSONAL POSSESSIONS. THEY GROUPED AROUND THEIR SPILL LIKE VULTURES WITH LITTLE REGARD FOR THE DEPARTED SCROOGE.



THE PHANTOM SPREAD ITS DARK ROBE BEFORE HIM, AND WITHDRAWING IT, REVEALED A ROOM OF DEATH IN BOB CRATCHIT'S HOME. THE FAMILY WAS GATHERED IN GRIEF OVER THE PASSING OF THEIR SON, TINY TIM.



SCROOGE FELL TO HIS KNEES. "I WILL HONOR CHRISTMAS IN MY HEART, AND TRY TO KEEP IT ALL YEAR! I SHALL NOT FORGET THE LESSONS YOU SPIRITS HAVE TAUGHT ME! BUT DO NOT LET THIS FATE BEFALL US!"



SUDDENLY, IT WAS MORNING. SCROOGE WAS IN HIS OWN BED. "THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS IS WITHIN ME," HE SHOUTED, AND BOUNDED OUT THE DOOR. THERE HE MET A BOY AND ORDERED HIM TO BUY THE BIGGEST TURKEY AND DELIVER IT TO BOB CRATCHIT'S HOUSE.



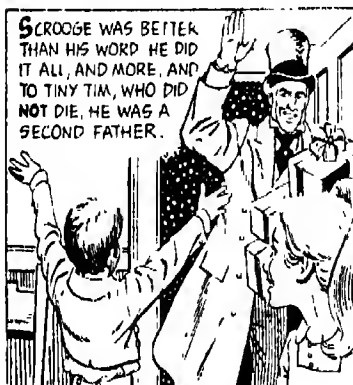
SCROOGE DRESSED HIMSELF IN "ALL HIS BEST" AND AT LAST GOT OUT ON TO THE STREETS. PEOPLE WERE BY THIS TIME POURING FORTH, AND SCROOGE REGARDED THEM ALL WITH A DELIGHTFUL SMILE.



SCROOGE WENT TO HIS OFFICE AND SURPRISED BOB CRATCHIT WHO WAS ALREADY AT WORK. "A MERRY CHRISTMAS, BOB!" SAID SCROOGE. "AND TO MAKE IT EVEN MERRIER, I'LL RAISE YOUR SALARY, AND HELP YOUR FAMILY! LET'S DISCUSS IT OVER DINNER!"



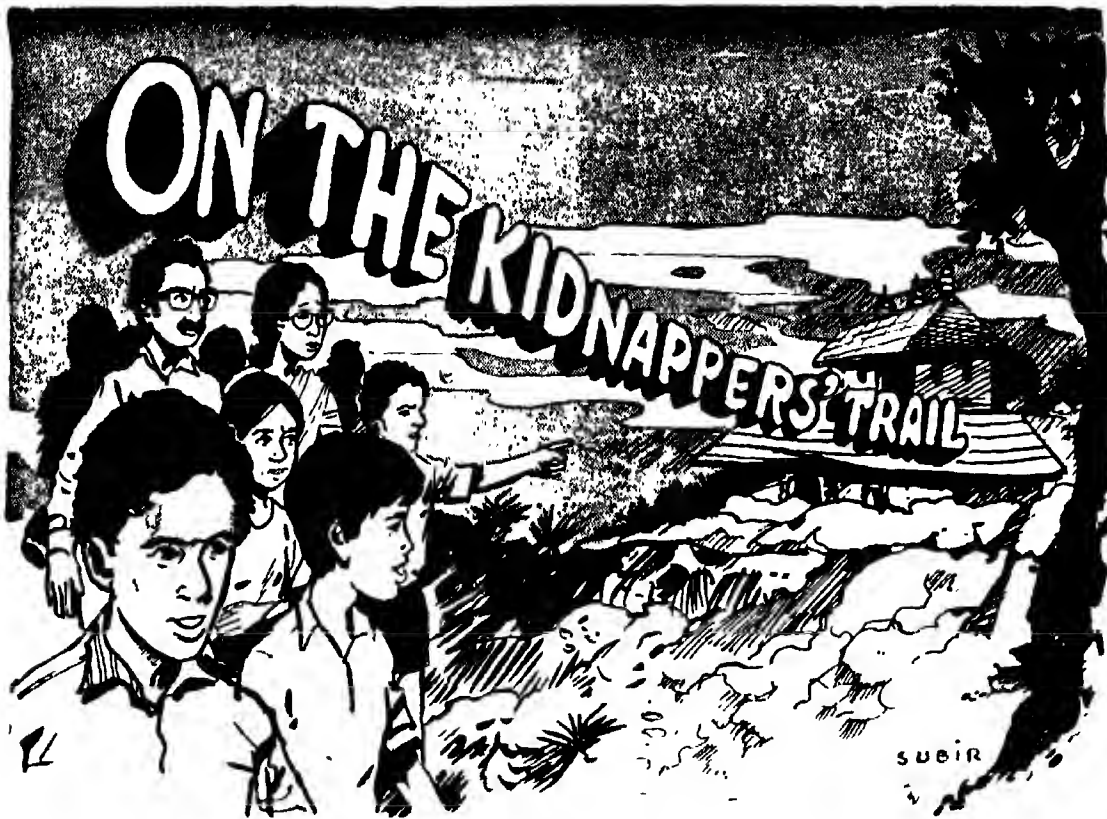
SCROOGE WAS BETTER THAN HIS WORD. HE DID IT ALL, AND MORE, AND TO TINY TIM, WHO DID NOT DIE, HE WAS A SECOND FATHER.



HE BECAME AS GOOD A FRIEND, AS GOOD A MASTER, AND AS GOOD A MAN, AS THE GOOD OLD CITY KNEW, AND IT WAS ALWAYS SAID OF HIM THAT HE KNEW HOW TO KEEP CHRISTMAS WELL. AND SO, AS TINY TIM OBSERVED, "GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE!"



The End



### THE STORY SO FAR

A group of school children go with their teachers, Rajasekhar and Sarada, to the ancient Koickal Palace. The whole morning they go round the monument. After lunch, the children are allowed to roam in the garden. Appu, Pratap, Biju, and John stray into the nearby forest and have a good view of the Kali Hills. Pratap tells them some fearful stories about the temple and its deity. When people even turn away their eyes from the hills, Appu declares his intention to go up the dreaded place, some day. That very day, fear grips the children when they find that little Vinita is missing. A thorough search is in vain and the children and their teachers return to the village and inform the headmaster, the police, and Vinita's mother, Mrs. Panicker.

Next day Appu, Biju, and Pratap set out on their own. At the Palace, they meet Shankar the guard. They are told that the Maharajah's chamber is out of bounds for

everyone. The boys overhear some of the conversation between Shankar and his friend Anand 'Sahab' who, it appears, is a frequent visitor to the Palace. They comb the area for Vinita, but could only pick up a blood smeared handkerchief. Before they leave the Palace, they curiously watch Shankar emerging from the Maharajah's chamber!

The three friends next morning meet Mr Paniker, a Customs' official in Bombay. He is narrating to his friend, Mr. Khan, Superintendent of Police, how one of a gang of antique smugglers, called Reddy, had fallen into their net. A note dropped into Mr. Khan's car reads: "You release Reddy, we release Vinita" Ha! the Reddy connection!

On their way home, the boys are accosted by the proprietor of a studio. He gives them some photos taken by Rajasekhar at their picnic. One of them shows Vinita running after a butterfly, and followed by a bearded

man—Anand! This is some clue which they want to pass on to Mr. Panicker and Mr. Khan. They are away at the Palace, says Mrs. Panicker. Off they go to the Palace, where the boys miss them once again. Rain makes them stick around and are rewarded with an open door to the Maharajah's chamber. They avoid being seen by Shankar, Anand, and a stranger carrying a strangely-looking packet. When the door is closed behind them, the boys start on their probe and are led to a dark tunnel. Suddenly, Pratap can see Appu's head in a silhouette. Pratap has his eyes fixed on the house at the far end. He stumbles on a rock and hurts his toe. He prompts the other two to proceed. The house is not deserted, as Appu and Biju find to their surprise and dismay. Two ruffians recognise the boys. "They must

be friends of that little girl," says one of them and pushes them into a room. Is Vinita, too, a captive there? the boys wonder.

Meanwhile, the police have traced the urchin who dropped the "Reddy note" in Mr. Khan's car. Ramu tells him and Mr. Panicker how two men in a car had wanted him to do the job and how he was rewarded with five rupees. No, he doesn't remember the car number, but can identify them.

It's now the turn of Pratap's father and Biju's brother to report that the boys and their friend Appu have not returned home. A hurried search proves futile. Mr. Khan calls for an open search, while Mr. Panicker suggests caution, lest the kidnappers get the scent and change their strategy. The entire village appears to be out in the streets expecting the four children to turn up.

## CHAPTER 10 : Reunion at Last!

PRATAP waited in the tunnel for a long time. Why weren't Appu and Biju back? Did they find Vinita? Or were they caught by the Reddy gang? he wondered. By now he even forgot the pain on his injured toe. He knew his duty was to go back to the village and inform the elders about all that they saw and learnt. But how to get there? He was certain that he wouldn't be able to walk all the way through the tunnel back to the Palace. It was a long, long way. And even if he managed to go all the way, would the door be open? Besides, there was very little chance of his being able to escape without being seen by anyone. No, there was no question of going back through the tunnel.

It was quite likely there was some way out at the other end. He got up, slowly moved forward and looked around. No one was to be seen anywhere. It was absolutely quiet. He walked a few paces towards the house, still keeping himself in the shadow. Suddenly, he noticed that the steps continued on the other side of the house. He

could not see where they led to, for, after a few steps, it was dark once again. Anyway, he decided to explore in that direction. He slowly climbed the steps, wondering where he was and what time it was. Would he ever be able to escape from there? Would he be able to save his friends? And rescue Vinita?

He knew their parents must be terribly worried now. They must be looking for them everywhere. If only he could reach the village and tell them all that he knew!

The steps suddenly ended and Pratap was totally surprised when he saw that he was standing on open ground. He looked up. He could see the sky, a pale moon, and some stars. After a while, his eyes got adjusted to the faint light. He could now see things better. He was on a hill. There were a few trees around him. On top of the hill, there seemed to be another structure, but he could not see it clear.

Where was he? He could not guess at all. Suppose he went down the hill, where would he reach? In any case, the light was

not sufficient for a safe try. There did not seem to be any other house nearby.

Suddenly, a thought flashed through his mind. Was he on, of all places, the dreaded Kali Hills? Was the house the haunted bungalow constructed by the Englishman? Fear gripped him when he remembered that Mr. Watson and his wife had been killed the very day they moved in.

What was he to do now? He could not run away; it was too dark for that. Should he get back into the tunnel? He had just escaped from there by the skin of his teeth. If he went back, he was sure to be caught by Shankar and Anand 'Saheb'. That would spoil all hopes of escape, not only for him but for his friends, too. No, he had to muster enough courage and try best to get to the village as early as possible. He decided to wait for the daybreak.

He looked around for a place where he could rest. At some distance, he saw something like a platform. Pratap walked towards it. The path was bushy and uneven. And his toe was in bandage. But he managed to reach the place. It was part of some ruins. What remained was a plain surface. Pratap stretched himself on it.

Slowly, the cool air made him sleepy.

It was almost dawn when he woke up. The sun was about to rise, and there was now better light, and the surroundings were clearer. He could see the temple on top of the hill. It seemed in a shambles. To his left, he could also see the roof of the bungalow. From the tunnel, it had looked a small house. Not so from the hill. It was quite a big house.

Pratap got up and looked around. No, there was nobody to be seen anywhere. This was the time to escape. The cool air and sleep had refreshed him. He was no longer tired. He started descending slowly. The path was clear though not smooth and easy. There were boulders and bushes. After about half-an-hour, he reached the foot of the hill. Still there was no sign of any habitation. A vast stretch of paddy-field lay before him. He guessed he would have to go across to find any houses. In any case, there was no road in any other direction.

Presently, he could see houses on the other side of the field. It was a great relief. There would be people there, and he could ask them for directions. He walked faster.



There was a road on the other side of the field. Pratap reached the road and walked towards the nearest house.

A motor cycle coming from behind stopped near him. The young rider asked Pratap, "Hello, I don't think you belong to this place. I haven't seen you here. What're you doing here?"

"I lost my way," said Pratap. "I've to reach my village and I don't know which way to go." Pratap decided not to tell him about his missing friends.

"Oh, I see," said the stranger in a sympathetic tone. "Where exactly do you want to go?"

Pratap mentioned his village.

"Well, that's where I'm also going," said the young man. "Why don't you hop on? I'll drop you there."

Pratap hesitated for a moment. Would it be safe to go with a stranger? But he was smiling, and he looked a gentleman. 'Okay,' thought Pratap, 'I'll take the risk.' He got on to the pillion, and the motor cycle sped away, as Pratap continued to wonder whether he had done the right thing.

The road was deserted. It was early morning, and people were yet to stir out. Soon, Pratap had some idea where they were. Another left turn and they would be on familiar road, the road from Koickal Palace to his village. The man, however, turned right when they came to the crossing!

Pratap was confused. "Are we going in the right direction?" he asked.

"Of course, we are," was the firm reply.

Pratap was not so sure. He looked for familiar landmarks. They did not pass by any of them for a long time.

"Stop!" cried Pratap. "We're going the wrong way. We're going away from the village."

"I know," said the man. His tone had suddenly changed. It was somewhat menacing. "You're coming with me till I find out *where* you spent last night and *what* you found out. You're not going home

till then, okay?" The man turned his head and looked at Pratap. He had an ugly grin on his face. Pratap felt a chill run through his spine. He knew he was in danger.

The motor cycle went fast, like a bullet. The road was straight and deserted. Pratap knew there was very little he could do for the time being. He held on to the pillion. Somehow he had to escape before they reached Koickal Palace. Once they were there, Pratap knew, he too would be caught. But how could he escape? There was no question of jumping off the vehicle. That would be suicidal. He wanted to shout for help. Unfortunately, there was no one on the road. He realised that he knew too much to be safe. In fact, he knew almost all that the police wanted to know. So, it was essential that he reached the village, and soon too.

They were now fast nearing the Palace. They took the last turn towards the Palace. Suddenly, the man slowed down. Pratap looked ahead. There was a barricade across





the road — a police jeep, right in the middle of the road.

As the barricade came immediately after the turn, the man did not have enough time to turn back, and the motor cycle came almost to a halt near the jeep.

Pratap immediately jumped from the pillar shouting, "Help! help!" He ran towards the jeep even as a few policemen were jumping out of it. The young man swerved back the motor cycle.

"Stop, or I'll shoot!" came a gruff voice from inside the jeep.

Ignoring the warning, the man tried to speed away. Hardly had he gone ten feet when a bullet pierced the rear wheel. The motor cycle went zigzag for a few seconds. The man had to struggle hard to steady the vehicle. He soon found himself being held by two policemen.

"Come, come with us," they said and pushed him towards the jeep.

Meanwhile, Pratap was talking to the police officer who had fired the shot. "He was trying to kidnap me because I know the whereabouts of my friends. It was God who sent you here. Now we can save them."

"Last night we heard that three of you were missing. So, the Superintendent had road blocks put up everywhere and all passing vehicles checked. Now, where are your friends?"

"First, I would like to meet Mr. Khan," said Pratap. "I'll tell you all that I know then."

The police officer asked two of his men to wait at the road block, and then left with Pratap, and three of his men holding the motor cycle rider.

"We've to go as fast as possible," said Pratap.

The officer agreed and instructed the driver accordingly. They reached Mr. Panicker's house in half-an-hour. Nobody was seen outside, except two policemen. The officer jumped out of the jeep and went in. Pratap followed him. Mrs. Panicker

opened the door and looked at the officer enquiringly.

"Is the Superintendent here?" he asked.

"He left a few minutes ago. I think he's gone to the station."

"Aunty, where's Uncle?" asked Pratap from behind. Only then did she notice him.

"Oh, Pratap! Where have you been, my boy? Uncle, too, has gone along with Mr. Khan."

"Let's hurry," said the police officer and ran back to the jeep.

"Aunty, we're going to rescue Vinita, soon!" Pratap shouted over his shoulder.

The jeep sped towards the police station. It took them only two or three minutes to reach there. Pratap ran inside. Mr. Panicker sprang up from his seat. "Pratap! Where have you been? Where are your friends?"

"Oh, you're here!" exclaimed Mr. Khan.

Pratap quickly told them all that happened. The men sat in absorbed silence as they heard about the secret chamber, the tunnel, and the bungalow on Kali Hills. Pratap also handed over to Mr. Khan the blood-stained handkerchief they had picked at the Palace and the photograph of Vinita.

Mr. Khan lost no time in deciding what to do. He told his Deputy, "We shall go in two batches. You take 20 men and two vehicles and go to the Palace. Take the guard, Shankar, into custody. Make him lead you to his accomplices. Keep the chamber door open and watch out for people trying to escape. I'm going up the Kali Hills."

Four vehicles started and disappeared from the station in no time. Mr. Panicker and Pratap went with Mr. Khan in his car. The party reached the foot of the hills in about forty minutes. Pratap led them up the hill. He had come down the slopes barely two hours earlier. He ran up the hill very fast. He was neither afraid nor tired. All the fearful stories he had heard about the Kali Hills appeared distant and vague. Once they reached the top of the hill and started descending to the bungalow,

Mr. Khan led the group. They found the front door closed. Mr. Khan knocked, and a tall, moustachioed man opened the door. He was taken aback to see a revolver aimed at him. He raised his hands, automatically.

"Where are the children? Set them free, immediately!" Mr. Khan thundered.

The man turned and walked in. Mr. Khan, Mr. Panicker, and Pratap followed behind. Before going in, Mr. Khan shouted to his men, "Guard the building from all sides. Let no one escape."

The man took out a bunch of keys from his pocket and opened a room. Appu and Biju ran out. The three boys hugged each other. As the man opened another room, Mr. Panicker ran in. Vinita was standing in the middle with her eyes wide open in surprise.

"Vinn, my child!" Mr. Panicker took her in his arms.

"Daddy! You've come!" she uttered between sobs.

Mr. Khan made the man open other rooms as well. Two of them formed a kind of cellar. They were full of priceless antiques, like idols, lamps, vessels, and different kinds of artefacts. A man, who was guarding the cellar, was also taken into custody.

Mr. Khan got the house locked and sealed. The two men were handcuffed. "You take them to the station," Mr. Khan told the Inspector. "Two policemen will be on guard duty here. Let three others walk through the tunnel to the other end to ensure that no one remains here. They can come out of the other end. I'm now going to the Palace." He then left with Mr. Panicker and the four children.

As they drove, they listened to Vinita's tale — how she was caught from behind by Anand and taken to the Palace first and later led through the tunnel and kept in a lonely room, how she wept her life out and was told that she would be freed if she wrote a letter to her father, and how she managed



to put it off by one excuse or another. Luckily, she was not harmed and had even been given food. That was some comfort, though she had missed her mother and her friends.

By the time they reached Koickal Palace, the police party had already rounded up Shankar, Anand, Baldy, and another man.

That evening, Appu, Biju, and Pratap and their parents were at Vinita's house. Mr. Khan, too, had joined them at tea. "The Police Department is immensely grateful to all of you, children," said Mr. Khan. "What would you like to get as a gift?"

"Please take us on a picnic to one of those tiny islands near Cochin," suggested Appu.

"Do you think there will be some mystery for us to solve there, too?" asked Pratap with a mischievous smile.

There was a burst of laughter.

**Radhakrishnan**

*(Concluded)*

# What the United Nations Means to Me

**I**N the early years of my school life, I learnt what the abbreviation U.N.O. stood for, for my General Knowledge examinations. It had no particular significance to me, then.

Meanwhile, I grew up into an avid fan of Phantom comics. Diana Palmer, Phantom's girl friend, is a nurse at the W.H.O.—a branch of the UN. I remember, I was then fascinated with the high-rising UN building which, I learnt later, is in New York.

As I found my way through the absorbing pages of world history, I discovered in myself a passionate desire to know at first hand about those days of struggle. Thus, I passed many rainy evenings listening to my mother, who had run away from E. Pakistan.

The year was 1971! The days of murder, of fanatic zeal, and of flights through the night in a desperate bid to reach safety and survival. Each day was fraught with mortal fear as thousands and thousands lost their homes and their dear ones, killed by those who, only a few days ago, had called themselves their brothers. In my mind's eyes I could see it—I could hear it! The empty, desolate eyes of the women as they watched helplessly while their domestic world crumbled to mere ashes in front of them. The merciless fire, which reddened the dark night sky, and the far away heart-breaking cries which violated the quiet of the night.

My mother escaped with her parents, struggling barefoot through jungles and plains, fighting through the overwhelming currents of numerous rivers and rivulets with only their lives and a bundle of clothes as their sole



*The accompanying write-up by Swati Ghosh (above) of Delhi was awarded the first prize in the UN Essay Contest conducted by the Children's Book Trust recently.*

possessions. They had no food, no shelter, no water to drink. And, then, in their dark world of hopelessness, there came a ray of hope. My mother, with her family, and thousands of other countrymen and women were given shelter in the UN Refugee Camp.

Only one generation separates me from those days and, indeed, I can keenly feel even today the relief that my countrymen must have felt by the UN's humanitarian action.

Similar situations had arisen at other times in other parts of the world—in Korea, in Viet Nam, and in the Middle East—the story of violence had continued to draw blood from the heart of Asia. To me, now, the work which the UN had done through its various agencies in such circumstances took on a new meaning. The humanness of this world organisation had saved not one country but many; it had stopped the hungry cries of thous-

sands of babies in far away Malaysia; it had re-animated in the people of Korea the will to live and to survive the devastations of war. There was a new ray of hope on the horizon.

On my thirteenth birthday, I received a UNICEF card. It was to me a greeting from a friend who had not only helped my Indian brothers and sisters, but had proved a salvation to war-torn, flood-wrecked Korea.

So, on October 24, when the United Nations Charter was read out at a function in our school, I was truly convinced of its peaceful and humanitarian character.

Today, as I sit writing this, I feel that I owe my very education to the fact that I have not had to experience the war-wrecked times. Secure in the knowledge that any issue related to world problems would be discussed freely in the world forum of the United Nations and that hostilities the world over would be brought to the conference table, I can hope to fulfil my ambitions; I am determined to pledge myself to the furtherance of human development and comfort.

I can look forward to a world where mankind will be concerned with fruitful developments, where selfish conflicts in the fields of politics, economy and society would be things of the past. I can dream of a time when my country, along with all other developing countries of today, will stand forth as a self-sufficient nation enjoying a flourishing trade, prosperous economy, and a society free of all kinds of discrimination. I can dream... for I know, my dream will be fulfilled by the diligent, selfless workers of our friend—the United Nations Organisation.

My black brothers and sisters in far

away South Africa are no more companionless in their struggle against apartheid. Across the barriers of race and geography, we reach them, to fight along with them, against that abhorrence to the conscience of mankind—the apartheid. United together in this world organisation, we have made their cause ours, to fight against the white regime and free them from the chain of this heinous crime against humanity.

All over the world today, my destitute brothers and sisters need not feel that they are homeless any more. Like in a mother's arms, they find solace in the love and sympathy of the UN and the peoples of the world. On the threshold of adolescence, many of them stand educated today due to the help extended by the UNICEF and the UNESCO.

Today to them the world is a friend, a new place to live in, for they have found hope here; they have found a cause to live.

For the misfits in society, to those who have committed follies because they were misguided, there is sympathy. No more condemnation, for there is now someone to listen to them, someone to understand them, someone to look after the disabled, the aged, the mentally imbalanced. That is the United Nations.

So, today, I can truly say that I, with the youth of the world, will build a brighter tomorrow, a tomorrow unblemished by the stains of war, conflict, ignorance, poverty, and sorrow—for, the United Nations will help me by providing the security of a peaceful world, a world full of hope, a world which strives to develop economic, political, and social understanding among its nations.

# SHANKAR'S INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S COMPETITION 1984

*Dear Children,*

This competition is open to all of you, wherever you are, provided you are below 16, that is born on or after January 1, 1968.

You can paint, draw or write on whatever is of interest to you.

There is no entry fee.

With each entry should be a certificate from your parent, guardian or teacher that it is your original and unaided work and done in 1983.

Every entry should be an individual and not a joint effort.

All entries should carry:

- \* Your full name
- \* Boy or girl
- \* Date of birth
- \* Nationality
- \* Full address
- \* Subject/Title of entry

These particulars, in this order, should be written in English in block letters at the back of every painting or drawing or at the end of every written entry.

The organisers will not be able to accept any entry without these particulars.

Entries from one or more of you can be sent together. We will not be returning your entries.

The copyright of all entries will rest with Shankar's International Children's Competition.

## **For Paintings and Drawings**

Use any medium, except black lead pencil.

No painting or drawing should be less than 30 cm × 40 cm (12" × 16") in size.

You can submit upto six entries. But please do not mount or frame them.

## **For Entries in Writing**

Only entries originally written in English will be considered. Every entry should carry a certificate to this effect from your parent, guardian or teacher. Please note that translations do not qualify for the Competition.

You can submit up to six entries.

Entries may be in the form of short stories,

essays, poems, plays, descriptive writing and the like.

**The last date for receipt of entries is December 31, 1983.**

Those of you who live far away from Delhi should send your entries well in advance, especially if you are sending them by surface mail.

Send your entries to me at the following address:

**The Secretary**

**Shankar's International Children's Competition  
Nehru House, 4 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg  
New Delhi 110002, INDIA**

## **Prizes**

The entries will be judged, for the award of prizes, by the organisers with the help of a panel of judges.

*For the best painting or drawing:* **The President of India's Gold Medal.**

*For the best entry in writing:* **The Children's Book Trust Gold Medal.**

Also to be awarded are 24 Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Gold Medals, about 400 prizes and 400 Silver Medals.

In addition, Certificates of Merit will be given to deserving entries.

The best entries will be published in a prestigious annual compendium called Shankar's Children's Art Number, of which the 35th Volume is due to be brought out in December 1984. Selected entries will also appear in **Children's World**.

All competitors are entitled to a copy of the Art Number at half the sale price. You do not have to buy a copy of the Art Number in order to enter the Competition.

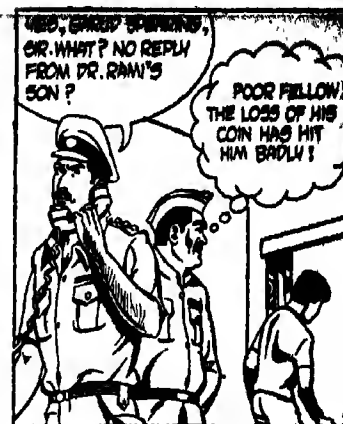
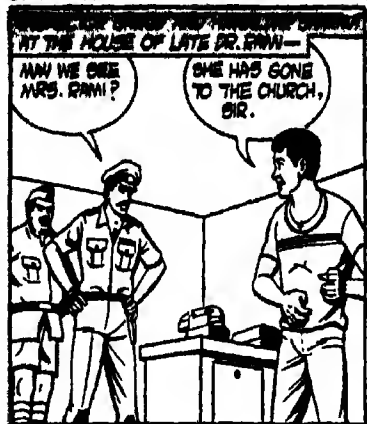
Well, children, go ahead and good luck!

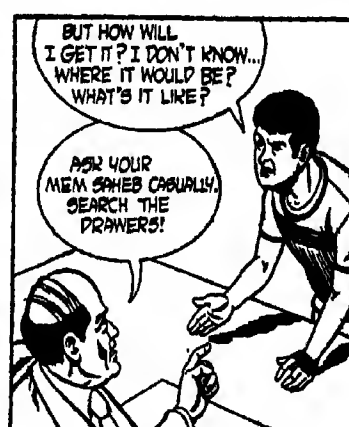
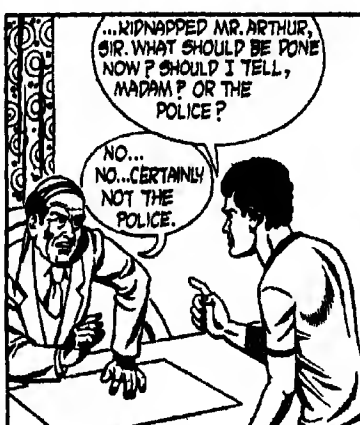
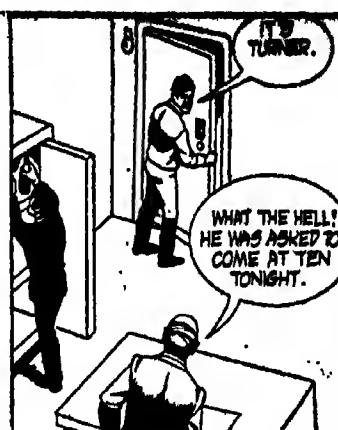
With love,

*Yours truly*

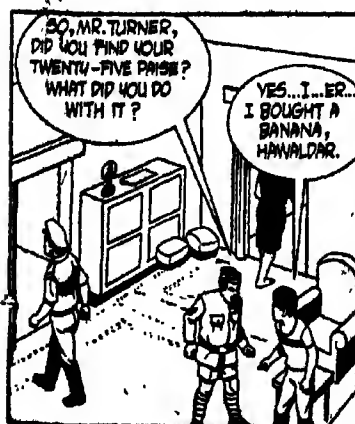
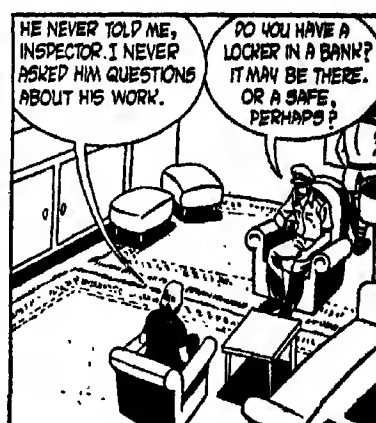
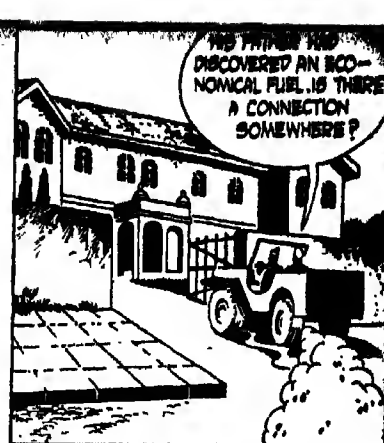
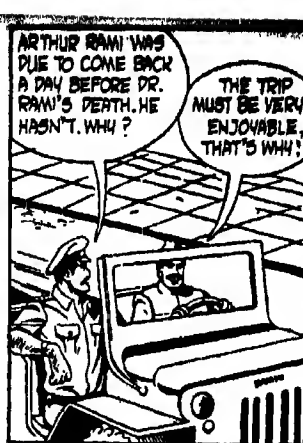
*Yamuna Shankar*

Secretary, SICC













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**W**INDY the woodpecker lived in the city zoo. He was quite happy in his spacious cage. They had even kept there a big bark for him to peck on.

But, sometimes he used to wonder about all the birds and beasts enjoying the vastness of the blue sky and the green jungle.

One day, the zoo cleaner was careless enough to keep the cage-door open for a while, and Windy flew away towards the distant jungle. Nobody could catch him.

After a few days he reached the jungles. He was really surprised to see no men, no cars, and no houses in the woods. The animals never went to school. They suffered silently when they fell ill. There was no doctor there.

Windy thought of helping the animals. He sat on the branch of a tall tree and shouted: "A doctor in the jungles! Windy the woodpecker will cure you! Come for any trouble in the nose, ears, or mouth! He'll also remove your 'thorns!'"

The animals heard him and laughed,

but Windy did not give up. Every day, he sat there and shouted the same words.

One day, a bear came to him. "Doctor, my throat is blocked. I cannot eat anything!" he whispered.

"Don't worry!" soothed Windy. "Open your mouth and close your eyes!"

Windy adjusted a strong piece of wood between the bear's teeth, so that he could not shut his jaws, and then peeped inside. A big piece of beehive had got wedged in his throat. With the help of his strong, long beak Windy took it away, removed the piece of wood, and the bear was cured! He smiled from ear to ear and asked Windy, "What about the fees? Some honey? Or....."

"Just your friendship," replied Windy, and from that day Bhaloo the bear became Windy's friend.

Another day, an elephant came limping. "Doctor! I think my leg is full of thorns. I can't walk properly," he complained.

With the help of Bhaloo, Windy took out the thorns from Jumbo's foot. He too asked, "Doctor! What are your fees? Some big barks to peck on?"

"No!" replied Windy. "Just your friendship!" So Jumbo, too, became Windy's friend.

Then, one day, a lion came roaring. "Oh my tooth!" he shouted. "Pains so much! Doctor, please help me."

With the help of Bhaloo and Jumbo, Windy controlled the lion and pulled out his bad tooth.

The lion was very happy. "What should I pay you?" he asked. "Some rabbits or rats, killed and ready to be eaten?"

"No! Just your friendship," replied Windy, and from that day, Shersing the lion joined his group.

The foursome enjoyed the freedom of the green jungles and gained fame by helping needy animals.

However, Pinto the python turned green with jealousy. He wanted to swallow Windy and finish the friend-



ship and fame of those four.

One summer afternoon, when Bhaloo was busy collecting honey, Jumbo was swimming in the cool river, and Shersing was sleeping in a dark cave, the python went to Windy.

"My throat pains, Doctor!" he said in a gruff tone, and opened his mouth. As soon as Windy tried to peep into his throat, he sucked the bird and laughed happily.

Windy was amazed to find himself in a dark passage, but he understood within a minute what had happened to him. He started pecking at the python's skin from inside. Pintoo shouted with pain.

Pappy the parrot had seen Windy going in Pintoo's jaws, and went dumb with shock. He regained his senses to hear Pintoo's shouts and flew to the

river to call Jumbo.

They all came running to the unhappy python. Shersing caught Pintoo; Bhaloo forced his jaws open; and Jumbo, with his long trunk, sucked out the half-dead bird. They aired him, poured some cool water, and revived Windy. They turned to the python. "Don't be so wicked next time," roared the lion.

"Don't trouble kind birds and animals again."

"Or we'll punish you," threatened red-eyed Bhaloo.

"Even small animals have big and powerful friends," said Jumbo.

That night, with the help of the fireflies, they celebrated the victory of good over evil. Diwali had come to the jungles.

Pramila Naniwadekar

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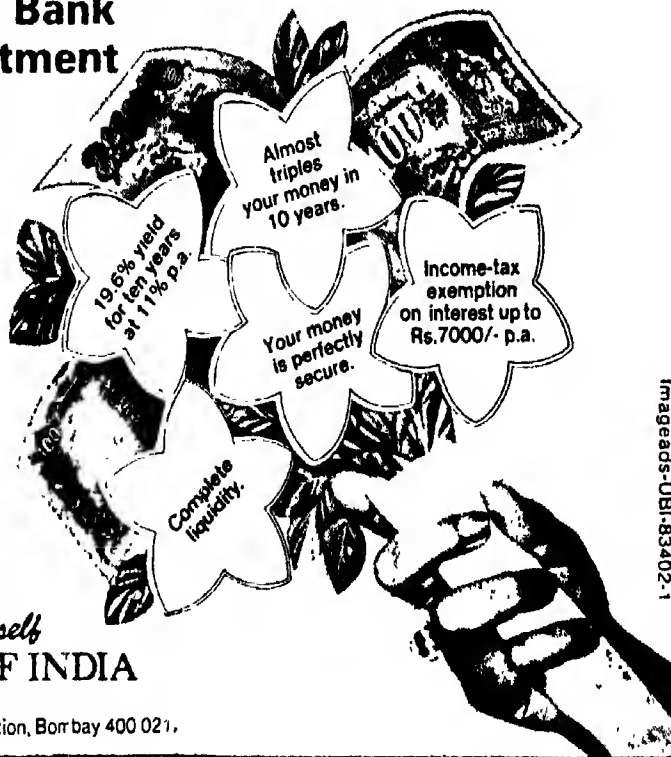


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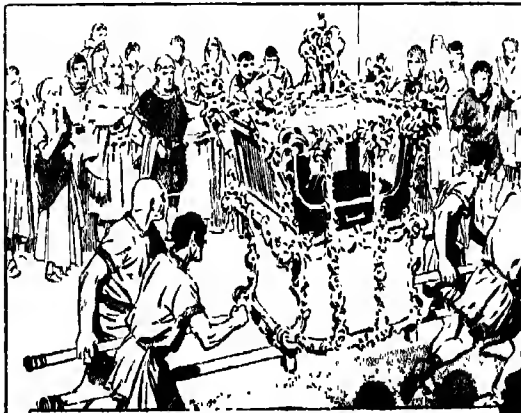
SIMOF/JIL/3/83



**Our Story:** PRINCE VALIANT HAS STUNNED ADAM WITH A STALEMATE. THE CROWD GROANS, DENIED THE EXPECTED EXECUTION: BECAUSE NEITHER KING HAS FALLEN, NEITHER MUST DIE. ULF AND ALP ARSLAN, ZOG'S TWIN BOYS, ARE SET FREE. AND IN THE HUSH, A LITTLE BOY QUESTIONS HIS MOTHER. "WHAT ABOUT PRINCESS GRENDL?" HE ASKS.



"DOES THIS MEAN SHE MARRIES NO ONE?" "GRENDL!" THE THROG TAKES UP THE CRY, REMINDING KING ZOG THAT THE TOURNAMENT'S PRIZE....



.... WAS TO BE HIS DAUGHTER'S HAND IN MARRIAGE. HE SENDS WORD TO THE PALACE AND THE PRINCESS MAKES HASTE. SWEET GRENDL, THE POETS ACCLAIMED HER FOR HER BEAUTY YET NONE BUT THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD HAD SET EYES UPON HER. THE TOURNAMENT JUDGE DELIVERS HIS VERDICT:



"BEFORE TODAY, THE MASKED STRANGERS WERE TIED WITH PRINCE VALIANT AND ALP ARSLAN. AFTER THE STALEMATE, THEY ARE STILL TIED."

BUT VAL STEPS BEFORE KING ZOG. "MY LORD," HE SAYS, "I HAVE ALREADY A WIFE AND MUST DECLINE THE HONOR!" "AND I TOO," SAYS YUAN CHEN....

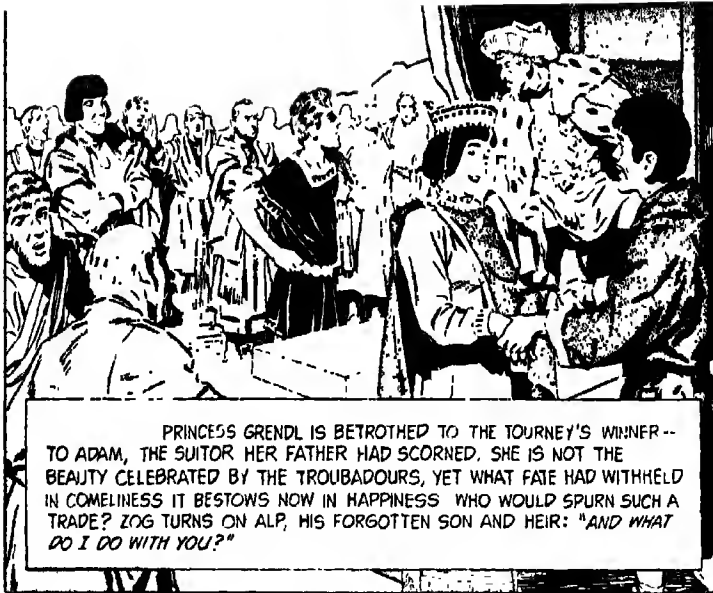


.... DOFFING HIS MASK AND SMILING AT VAL'S GASP OF RECOGNITION. "AND SO MUST I," SAYS ALP. "I CANNOT WED MY OWN SISTER."

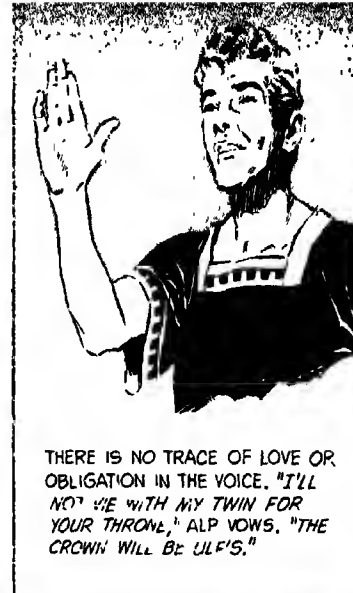


ADAM SMILES AT LAST, FOR HE IS THE ONLY ONE LEFT. AS GRENDL ALIGHTS FROM THE LITTER THE CROWD SNICKERS. A HUNDRED LOSING CONTESTANTS PRAISE THE GODS FOR THEIR BAD LUCK. BUT LOVE IS BLIND. "GRENDL," CRIES ADAM, SHEDDING HIS MASK. "ADAM," CRIES GRENDL, SHEDDING HER VEIL. "CURSES," CRIES ZOG, SHEDDING HIS DIGNITY, FOR GRENDL HAS WON HER OLD SUITOR.





PRINCESS GRENDL IS BETROTHED TO THE TOURNEY'S WINNER -- TO ADAM, THE SUITOR HER FATHER HAD SCORNE. SHE IS NOT THE BEAUTY CELEBRATED BY THE TROUBADOURS, YET WHAT FATE HAD WITHHELD IN COMELINESS IT BESTOWS NOW IN HAPPINESS WHO WOULD SPURN SUCH A TRADE? ZOG TURNS ON ALP, HIS FORGOTTEN SON AND HEIR: "AND WHAT DO I DO WITH YOU?"



THERE IS NO TRACE OF LOVE OR OBLIGATION IN THE VOICE. "I'LL NOT BE WITH MY TWIN FOR YOUR THRONE," ALP VOWS. "THE CROWN WILL BE ULF'S."



PRINCE VALIANT, MEANWHILE, HAS BEEN THINKING. "IF YUAN CHEN IS HERE, CAN GALAN BE FAR AWAY?" HIS THOUGHTS ARE ANSWERED AS GALAN SWAGGERS FORWARD WITH THE CONFIDENCE OF SOMEONE TWICE HIS AGE AND THE EXCITEMENT OF SOMEONE HALF. HE GREET'S HIS FATHER MANFULLY....



.... ONLY TO FIND THAT HIS VOICE IS BEGINNING TO BREAK. IN GALAN'S SHY, EMBARRASSED SMILE, VAL SEES THE LITTLE BOY THAT USED TO BE. WITH HIS FAMILY VAL RETURNS TO THE CROWDED INN. THERE IS MERRY TALK OF YOUNG NATHAN, OF GALAN'S ADVENTURES, OF THE MASKED STRANGERS."



WATCHING THE REUNION, ALP IS CAUGHT UP IN ITS SPIRIT. AND ONCE, AS KAREN BRUSHES BY, HER EYES DANCE BEFORE HIS. FOR THE BRIEFEST MOMENT HE TAKES HER ARM AND KISSES HER CHEEK, THEN MAKES A DISORDERLY RETREAT

"VALETA," HE STAMMERS. "FORGIVE ME." KAREN TWINKLES. "I'M NOT VALETA AND I'M NOT SORRY."



BUT HER EYES DART AROUND THE ROOM. WHERE IS VALETA? AS NIGHT BEGINS TO FALL, EVEN VALETA IS NOT SURE.



VALETA IS GONE. SHE HAD SHAMELESSLY DOUBLE-CROSSED KAREN AND TOYED WITH ALP'S AFFECTIONS. SWITTEN WITH REMORSE, SHE SLIPS OUT OF SALONAE. HER ABSENCE IS NOTED AT DUSK. PRINCE VALIANT LEADS THE SEARCH AS VALETA, MILES AWAY, SLUMPS IN DESPAIR. "WHAT A WORM YOU HAVE BEEN!" SHE ACCUSES HERSELF.



LOST IN HER LOATHING, VALETA DOES NOT SEE THE SHADOW APPROACH. IT IS 'THE WANDERER.' 'COME, COME,' THE OLD WOMAN SAYS IMPATIENTLY.



SHE PULLS THE GIRL TO HER FEET. "MANY CENTURIES AGO," THE WANDERER RECALLS, "THERE WAS A WARRIOR NAMED SARGON. DAY AFTER DAY HIS LEGIONS HAD FOUGHT ONE ENEMY AND THEN THE NEXT UNTIL TIRED AND HUNGRY AND OUTNUMBERED THEY FACED THE FIERCEST FOE OF ALL.



"SARGON SPOKE TO HIS MEN. 'THE ENEMY'S BEST GENERAL IS CALLED DESPAIR. LET US SLAY HIM AND VICTORY IS OURS.' IN THEIR EAGERNESS TO FIND THE GREAT GENERAL, SARGON'S LEGIONS FELL UPON THE FOE. THEY WON MUCH GLORY THAT DAY, YET THE BODY OF GENERAL DESPAIR WAS NEVER FOUND.



"YOU WILL NOT FIND HIM," SARGON TOLD HIS TROOPS. "I SAW HIM CHASED FROM THE BATTLEFIELD BY GENERAL HOPE." WITH THOSE WORDS THE WANDERER DEPARTS, AND FOR SOME REASON VALETA'S SPIRITS REVIVE. SHE PLODS HOMEWARD, AND AT CITY'S EDGE IS PLUCKED FROM THE ROAD BY AN ANXIOUS FATHER. THE HARDEST PART COMES LATER-- WITH KAREN.



"CHILDREN," A WEARY PRINCE VALIANT SIGHS. THE MISTY ISLES-- AND ALETA'S DISCIPLINE-- SEEM INVITING, AND VAL HAS MADE PLANS FOR THE RETURN. GALAN LODGES A PROTEST.



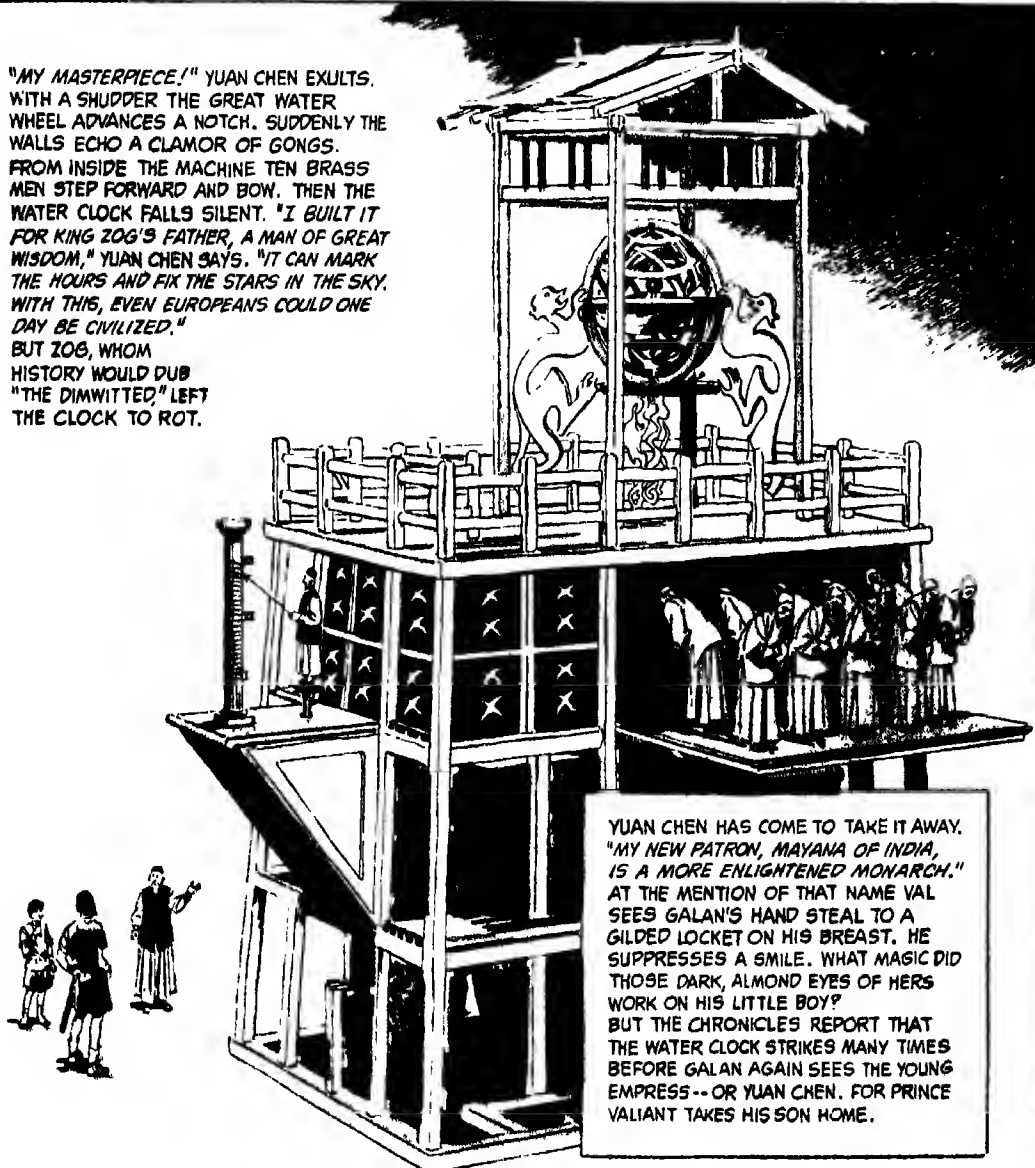


PRINCE VALIANT PREPARES TO RETURN WITH HIS FAMILY TO THE MISTY ISLES. BUT GALAN HAS ONE LAST ERRAND. "IT IS WHY YUAN CHEN AND I CAME TO SALONAE." HE EXPLAINS. THE NEXT MORN GALAN LEADS VAL TO AN ANCIENT WAREHOUSE BY THE WATERFRONT.



YUAN CHEN'S VOICE PIERCES THE DOOR: "WHAT CAN FLY BUT NOT STAND STILL / DEVOURING ALL WHILE EATING NIL? / WHAT IS WASTED, NEVER LENT / NEVER EARNED BUT ALWAYS SPENT?" VAL THINKS BRIEFLY, "TIME," HE ANSWERS FINALLY THE HINGES CREAK OPEN.

"MY MASTERPIECE!" YUAN CHEN EXULTS. WITH A SHUDDER THE GREAT WATER WHEEL ADVANCES A NOTCH. SUDDENLY THE WALLS ECHO A CLAMOR OF GONGS. FROM INSIDE THE MACHINE TEN BRASS MEN STEP FORWARD AND BOW. THEN THE WATER CLOCK FALLS SILENT. "I BUILT IT FOR KING ZOG'S FATHER, A MAN OF GREAT WISDOM," YUAN CHEN SAYS. "IT CAN MARK THE HOURS AND FIX THE STARS IN THE SKY. WITH THIS, EVEN EUROPEANS COULD ONE DAY BE CIVILIZED." BUT ZOG, WHOM HISTORY WOULD DUB "THE DIMWITTED," LEFT THE CLOCK TO ROT.



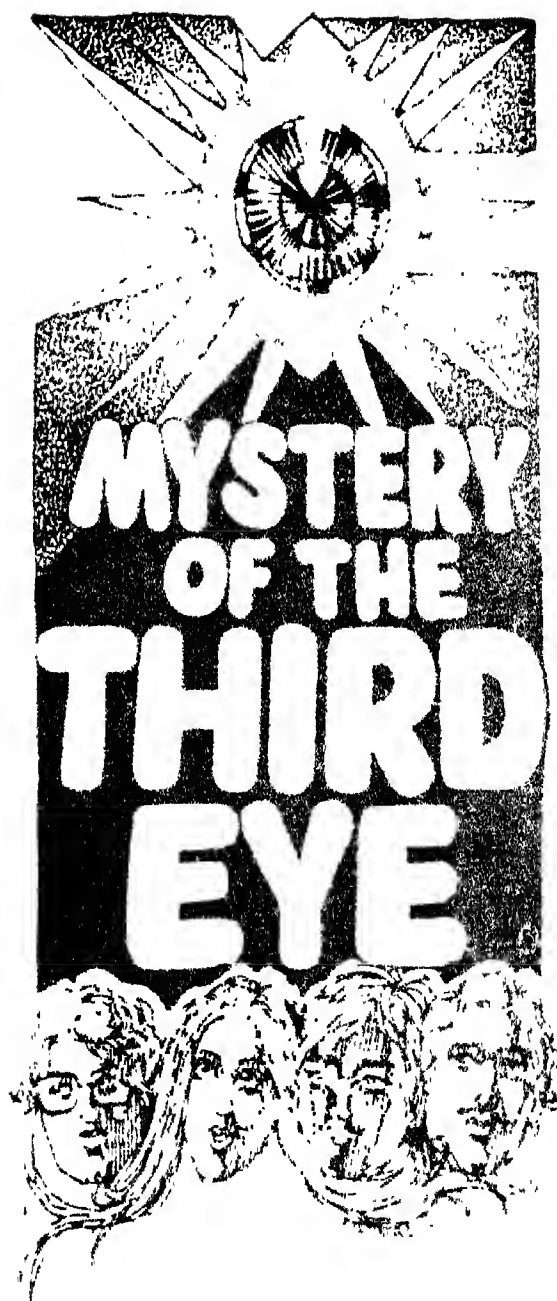
YUAN CHEN HAS COME TO TAKE IT AWAY. "MY NEW PATRON, MAYANA OF INDIA, IS A MORE ENLIGHTENED MONARCH." AT THE MENTION OF THAT NAME VAL SEES GALAN'S HAND STEAL TO A GILDED LOCKET ON HIS BREAST. HE SUPPRESSES A SMILE. WHAT MAGIC DID THOSE DARK, ALMOND EYES OF HERS WORK ON HIS LITTLE BOY? BUT THE CHRONICLES REPORT THAT THE WATER CLOCK STRIKES MANY TIMES BEFORE GALAN AGAIN SEES THE YOUNG EMPRESS--OR YUAN CHEN. FOR PRINCE VALIANT TAKES HIS SON HOME.

J. AN  
CULLEN  
MAGNAN  
2415

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(TO BE CONTINUED...)

5 22



### THE STORY SO FAR

Minoo and his pillion rider Ravi, on their way back from Khandala, are sent flying into the air when their bike is hit by a cream-coloured foreign car on the highway in the Western Ghats. Minoo lands safely on the road, but Ravi is catapulted to the edge of a cliff and falls on to a bush eight feet below where he hangs precariously. Their friends

on another bike, Jacob and Sonia, with the help of a passer-by, manage to pull him up. Luckily, he is not injured. He comes out of his daze soon, and the four friends continue their journey to the farm-house owned by Minoo's uncle. They see parked outside a restaurant the very same car, and Jacob is keen to settle scores with its two occupants. But he is dissuaded by Ravi. As luck would have it, soon after they arrive at the farm-house, the car draws up. The two men look like hippies — one presumably a Nepali with a Ghengiz Khan monstache, and the other wearing an 'Ankh', the Egyptian symbol of eternity, on a thick chain round his neck. They pick a quarrel with the youngsters. In the scuffle, Sonia knocks down the Nepali with a Karate chop, much to the surprise of her three friends. The hippies become wiser and drive away. Sonia is admitted a member of the "Tigers Club" by the others.

The radio news that night tells them of the theft of the emerald "Third Eye" from a Tibetan idol at an exhibition of precious idols in Bombay. Jacob guesses that his brother, Morris Cohen — an Inspector in the Bombay C.I.D. — would be on the case. So the "Tigers" decide to go to Bombay. At Bombay, Morris cautions them against snooping around. Yet, the four trace their way to the exhibition, where Jacob and Minoo manage to get in. They find Morris assuring a Tibetan official, Mr. Dorje, that everything would be done to recover the priceless emerald. After they are shooed away by Morris, Jacob and Minoo rejoin their two friends waiting outside, and later follow a dapper-looking man with golden hair and carrying a cane. They lose sight of him in one of the side streets, but come upon a Tibetan lama on the pavement. He looks calm and serene, but Sonia does not like his gaze. The four freeze in their shoes, as "The Ankh" and the Nepali, called Thapa, come out of a nearby hotel. Thapa shows something in his hand to the other. Suddenly, two strangers emerge from nowhere and

attack the hippies. The Nepali wails about one of them stealing something from him. Jacob picks up a key that has fallen out of Thapa's pocket and slips it into his own. He realises that The Ankh and the man they have been following look almost alike. On

enquiry, they are told that one of the assailants is Ahmad Khan, a dealer from Chor Bazar. Sonia feels that the lama is more curious about what is happening around him than his prayer wheel!

Now read on . . .

### III AT CHOR BAZAR

"CHOR BAZAR!" exclaimed Jacob. "That's where we'll go! Maybe we'll see Ahmed Khan there!"

"What good will that do?" asked Minoo, shrugging on the sleeveless jacket with the Tiger emblem.

"Well, have you any better ideas?" asked Jacob.

"No!"

"Then Chor Bazar is where we'll go! We just might find out something! Hey, Minoo, will you call your dog off?" Jacob pushed at the big, hairy animal

that was trying to lick him all over.

"Heinz!" Minoo shouted. "Behave yourself!"

Poor Heinz retired to a corner, and sat watching the "Tigers" longingly.



"What's Chor Bazar?" asked Sonia, who was new to Bombay.

"It's a place for curios and antiques," explained Jacob, ever ready with information. "Both fake and genuine! One can pick up all sorts of things."

Next morning found the Tigers walking the narrow, over-crowded streets of Chor Bazar. The shops were literally overflowing onto the road. Some were junk shops. There were also shops where one could get old coins, curios, even old clothes collected from homes in exchange for new vessels.

The shopkeepers sat around on 'khatiyas' (rope cots) indifferently, while some children played around. Very rarely did anyone come forward to ask what one wanted. On Antique Galli, one could browse around completely undisturbed. It was indeed a fascinating place. It made one's senses tingle with excitement, wondering if one could pick up a bargain!

"Oh Ravi!" Sonia bubbled. "I'm so thrilled! Look, there's a lampstand that Mummy would just love!"

"Look here," cut in Jacob, "we've come here for a purpose. Let's not be side-tracked. We want to find out what we can about Ahmed Khan."

"Hey quick! Hide in here!" urged Minoo.

"What's up...?"

"Just do as I tell you! It's Thapa! What's he doing here?"

"Who's he talking to? Wait a minute! Let me get closer!" whispered Jacob. Ten minutes later he returned, very excited. "Guess who Thapa met? Ahmed Khan!"

Minoo pursed his mouth in a silent whistle.

"Then what was that all about yesterday? Why did Ahmed Khan attack him?" Ravi asked.

"Thapa is probably a traitor. Working on both sides, whatever the sides are. And that's what we want to find out. Who is after what?"

"And the Tibetan lama is mixed up in all this, I'm quite sure. My sixth sense tells me..." said Sonia.

"Oh do keep quiet! You and your lama. You and your sixth sense!" Ravi scoffed. "If it works so well, then tell us what has happened to the emerald. Ha! Ha! Maybe you think you've got a third eye on your forehead, too? Is that what gives you these extra senses?"

"Now, will you both stop all this argument and come to your senses? Ha! Ha! Wasn't that a joke?" Jacob chuckled. "Seriously, though, just what's going on? Thapa, apparently in league with Ahmed Khan, faked a robbery so that something belonging to The Ankh would be stolen, without any suspicion falling on him!" he finished triumphantly.

"Boy! How did you work that out?" exclaimed Ravi, looking at Jacob with admiration.

"Now," continued Jacob, ignoring Ravi, "let's go home! Tomorrow, I propose to search the hippies' room!"

"You can't do that!" Sonia gasped. "What if you are caught? It's too dangerous!"

"I'll tell you something. Yesterday, Thapa dropped a key when he was attacked. I picked it up. It looks like a door key. I've a plan already worked out. Let's go home and I'll tell you about it," said Jacob.

They reached Jacob's house just as Morris was coming in. "Hey, you kids still snooping around? Well, here's one for you to think about!" He pulled out a visiting card. "Take a look at this!"

"What's it?" Sonia asked.

"A card the thief had the nerve to



leave behind near the idol."

Jacob took it and passed it around. It read: **THE GENTLEMAN THIEF.** There was a line above, written in hand: "Thank you!"

"Hey!" cried Sonia. "Remember the man who was hanging around outside the hall yesterday? He looked a real gentleman! I'm sure he's the one!"

"And he is in some way connected with The Ankh and Thapa," put in Jacob. "It's all too much of a coincidence."

"And what about the Tibetan monk?" persisted Sonia.

"Will you get him out of your mind, Sonia?" Jacob groaned, scratching his short stubble of hair agitatedly. "I'm going to play my violin. I can think better when I play it."

Everyone groaned. "We're not staying to listen to you!" Ravi said determinedly.

"I want to hear him play," put in Sonia. "Jacob, can I listen?"

"You can't help but listen!" Morris said sarcastically. "And now, hand me back the card. I don't know what prompted me to show it to you really. You'll start snooping around again. Let me know if you find anything out," he called back over his shoulder as he left the room.

Ravi and Minoo stayed back in the drawing room, while Sonia went with Jacob.

Suddenly, he stopped playing. "Got it!" he said. "Come on, let's go and tell the others. I'll dress like a hippie! Then no one will pay much attention to me. And Minoo can dress up as a fortune-teller, like the ones who roam around the roads. If he sees Thapa or The Ankh returning, he can delay them a bit. Ravi and Sonia can hide in one of the shops, and whistle three

long sharp whistles to warn me of danger."

"Oh, Jacob, do you think it'll work?" Sonia doubted.

"Why not? If we work it out properly, there shouldn't be any hitch. Come on, Sonia, let's go and tell the others."

"Oh no!" groaned Minoo, when he listened to Jacob. "Why can't Ravi be the fortune-teller?"

"Because he's too fat. Besides, you're used to acting in plays in school and college."

Just then the telephone rang. Jacob answered. The call was for Morris, who too had heard the ring and dashed into the drawing room. "It's for you," said Jacob.

"Speaking!" said Morris, snatching up the receiver. "WHAT? IN BROAD DAYLIGHT? Yes! Yes! I'll be there immediately. Send the jeep round. Another card? The same type? Okay. Make it snappy!" He dropped the receiver back into its cradle. "Another robbery!" he said, turning to the others in the room. "This time a diamond merchant at Jhaveri Bazar. In broad daylight. A well-dressed foreigner went there to buy diamonds. How he managed it no one knows, but one moment he was there, and so were the diamonds. The next moment—both were gone! And he left behind a card. Identical to the one in the hall!"

"Can we go with you, Morris?" asked Jacob.

"Certainly not! You just keep out of this! It's enough that you managed to get into the hall. If you want to be of help, stay home!" Morris dashed out and raced downstairs, as a Police jeep screeched to a halt at the porch.

"Well, what do you make of that?" Minoo asked Jacob.

"Same thief! Again, missing gems! Listen, Tigers. I'm determined to search Thapa and The Ankh's room! So tomorrow, we carry out our plan," Jacob said determinedly, cracking his knuckles. He usually did that when he got excited.

"Jacob, stop that!" cried Sonia. "What with Ravi always gesticulating, you cracking your knuckles, and Minoo chewing his lower lip, I'm going crazy! And no one is bothering about the Tibetan...."

"MONK!" the other three chorused together. "Give it up, Sonia! He's just a poor refugee!"

"So tomorrow is D-Day!" Jacob shouted.

Kamala Ramchandani

## NITOO THE NAUGHTY

—R. Madhava Rao



"Doctor, let me have my share of the fees; it was I who broke Nitoo's arm."

# PROBLEM BOY PREM

“WHY did you serve carrot salad for me, Mom?” protested Prem. “You know I hate carrots.” He pushed the carrot to a corner of his plate. “I’ll have some more kheer,” he announced and emptied the kheer into his bowl.

“Don’t do that, Prem,” his mother said sternly. “You should be eating a lot of fresh vegetables at this age, but you always throw them away. Leave some kheer for your sisters.”

Prem did not pay any heed to his mother. He finished the kheer, washed his hands hurriedly, and ran off to play.

His mother groaned in despair. This was a familiar scene in their house. Prem was the youngest in the family. He had two elder sisters, Manju and Meera. He had been so petted and pampered that he grew up to be a problem boy. He was very selfish and naughty. He threw his books, clothes, and toys all over his room and expected his mother to tidy it up for him. He ate whatever he wanted, without caring whether there was enough to go round. He always had his way. When his mother scolded him, he just sulked and threw up tantrums. He was naughtier than usual and his mother had to give up, always.

Prem was now eight years old, and his mother thought it was time he corrected his ways. She wondered how to tackle him. She decided to get some help from his teacher. She went over to his school and had a long discussion



with him. She came back happy.

The next day, Prem as usual got up late. “Mummy, keep my uniform and books ready!” he shouted, as he rushed to have his bath. When he came out of the bathroom, he did not find his uniform on the bed where his mother used to keep it for him daily. “Mom, where’s my uniform?” shouted Prem.

His mother said calmly, “I’m busy in the kitchen. You manage on your own.”

Prem ran around his room. The uniform he had worn the previous day was lying crumpled in a corner. Oh! no... he couldn’t wear it today! He opened the cupboard. The other pair of uniform was not inside. He ran to the clothesline. His uniform was hang-

ing there. "Why didn't you iron my uniform, Mummy?" Prem shouted.

"You should have done it yourself," replied his mother.

Prem got dressed, grumbling to himself. He ran to the dining table for his breakfast. His mother had kept hot idlis on his plate. "Oh, Mummy, you know I like only dosas. Let me have dosas!" Prem said in an irritated voice.

"No dosas today. Eat your idlis and run to school. You're already late," said his mother.

Prem pushed away his plate and got up in a huff. "I'll go straight to school," he said. To his surprise, Mummy did not come running to him with dosas. She just ignored him.

Prem went back to his room to get his school-bag. He had flung it away in a corner when he returned from school the previous evening. Usually, his mother sorted out the books and notebooks and arranged them on his shelf, but today she had not done it. They were all lying scattered on the floor, on the cot, and under his table. He hurriedly thrust the books he found into his bag and rushed off to school.

The first period was English. The teacher asked them to take dictation. Prem could not find his pen, in his bag. The teacher was angry and sent him out of the class. He had to stand outside for a whole hour. When the period came to an end, he entered the classroom with a sigh of relief. In the next Geography period, the students were asked to take out their atlases and mark various rivers and mountains. Prem found to his dismay that he had not brought his atlas. He had to stand outside the classroom again. His legs were aching. He felt terribly hungry. When

the bell rang, his face brightened, as the third period was Story-telling and Indoor Games, both of which he loved. But, what bad luck! The teacher asked him to write down a hundred times that he would be careful in future. Prem had to borrow a pen and spend all the time writing the imposition, while his friends had a jolly time listening to stories and playing their favourite games.

Prem felt miserable. As soon as the classes were over, he ran back home. He was greeted by the sweet smell of the biriyani his mother had prepared. His sisters, Manju and Meera, were at the table eating their lunch. Prem stopped in surprise when he saw his plate with the idlis he had refused at breakfast. "Mom, you've forgotten to clean my plate. Please, I'm hungry, and I want to eat biriyani," said Prem.

"I don't like throwing away food," said his mother. "You'll have to eat what you are served. If you're hungry, eat the idlis first. I won't allow you to waste anything."

Prem began to shout and scream, but nobody paid him any attention.

"Mom, the biriyani is super!" said Meera.

"These potato chips are fantastic!" Manju put in.

Prem stamped off to his room. It was still in a mess. His toys were thrown all over the room. His bed was in a crumpled state. Evidently, Mummy had not tidied up his room. Prem threw himself on his bed and cried and cried. He dozed off.

When he woke up, it was tea-time. His sisters were eating vadas and chutney. Prem saw his plate with the idlis still there. He knew he would have to





go without the delicious vadas if he did not eat the idls. He sullenly drew his plate and began to eat. Ugh! the idlis had gone cold. He should have eaten them in the morning itself. He managed to swallow them with a grimace. He then ran to his mother for vadas, but there were just two pieces left in the bowl. His mother gave them to him, and he went away munching them. "Children, all of you go and tidy up your rooms. Daddy has promised to take us to the circus today," said their mother.

Manju and Meera rushed off to their room. Prem felt too lazy. He sauntered away to the backyard to play with their pussy.

"Beep!" Prem heard his father's car and ran to greet him.

"Are the children ready?" asked his father.

"Wait a minute," said his mother and went in to look at their rooms. "Manju and Meera are ready, they have tidied up their rooms, but Prem's room is in a mess. He doesn't

want to come," said his mother.

"Oh...I do want to come," said Prem, horrified.

"Then, why didn't you tidy your room as I told you to? No treat for children who disobey," said his mother.

His parents and sisters soon got into the car and drove away, leaving Prem with the ayah.

Prem wailed and ranted.

"Why don't you be a good boy and do what your mother says?" said the ayah.

"Shut up!" Prem shouted. It was so boring to be alone in the house. He could not play in the garden as it was already dark. His room was so untidy that he did not want to play there. He just lay down on his bed.

Ouch! Something bit him. Prem jumped up with a yell and switched on the light. It was a cockroach. The ayah came in. "If you keep your room so dirty, all sorts of insects will make it their home. Serves you right!" she said.

"Go away, you old woman," shouted Prem. After a long time, he heard the car coming back.

Prem went and sat at the dining table for his dinner. Manju and Meera were glowing with happiness. "Wasn't that baby elephant cute?" said Manju.

"I liked the clowns the best," declared Meera.

They went on and on discussing all that they had seen. Prem felt miserable for having missed all the fun. His mother served cabbage. Prem tried to push it away to a corner of his plate, but stopped when he felt his mother's eyes on him. "If you don't eat it now, you'll have to eat it tomorrow," she said quietly.

Prem silently ate the cabbage, as he did not want to see it on his plate the next morning.

The next morning, Prem got up and hunted for his uniform. Both the pairs were lying crumpled up. "Mom, why didn't you ask the ayah to wash my uniforms?" Prem asked.

"You're old enough to do it yourself, Prem," said his mother. "I can't be running round to see where you have thrown your dirty uniform. Why did you not give your uniform to the ayah when she was washing all the other clothes?"

Prem had to wear a dirty set of uniform that day. He hunted up the other pair and gave it to the ayah. He ate his breakfast without a word of complaint and rushed off to school.

"Why's your uniform so dirty, Prem?" asked his teacher.

Prem hung his head in shame.

"Today you can call Prem Mr Dirty," said the teacher.

His classmates laughed. "Hello, Mr. Dirty!" they shouted.

Prem felt ashamed of himself. He decided then and there to turn over a new leaf and surprise everybody.

On reaching home, he went straight to his room and set about tidying it up. He arranged his toys in the box, his books on the shelf, and his clothes in a neat pile inside the cupboard. He then made his bed, and dusted the whole place. He called the ayah. "Will you please sweep and mop the floor in my room?" he asked politely.

"Oh, yes!" said the ayah.

Prem was happy to see his room looking clean once again. He ran to his mother and said, "Mom, take a look at my room."

His mother beamed with joy on seeing his room. "Ha! it looks nice!" she exclaimed. "Why can't you do it every day?"

"You just watch, Mom," said Prem.

When the Cleanliness and Good Conduct Award was announced at the School Day function, Prem's parents were pleasantly surprised to see their 'problem boy' go up the stage to receive it.

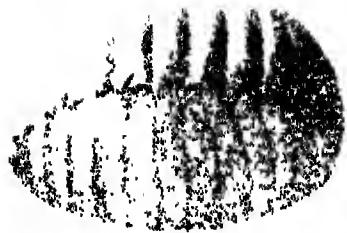
Gita Raman

## NITOO THE NAUGHTY

— R. Madhava Rao



"Didn't you see the No Parking sign? What's your car number?"



## PARACHUTING—3

# A BRIEF HISTORY



**M**AN'S dream of flying in space has been a reality for quite some time, but his **controlled descent** from the sky under the canopy of a parachute continues to evoke wonder and admiration in his friends.

The advent of the aeroplane sparked off the search for a safe parachute with which a flier could bale out from a fast moving plane in the event of an emergency. This was achieved in 1912, but too late for any innovative use in the First World War. In 1927, the Italians experimented with a small body of parachute troops, who would surprise the enemy by pouring on them from the sky and then defeat them in battle. The Russians were the

first to employ paratroopers in war during the Finnish Campaign of 1939-40.

In the Second World War, the Germans used paratroopers successfully in the invasion, first of Denmark and Norway and then of Holland and Belgium. Their biggest effort was the assault on Crete in May 1941. The Allies started shakily, but made extensive use of their massive airborne forces in the later stages of the War, in Normandy, at Arnhem, and for the Rhine crossings.

The first Indian Parachute brigade, the 50th, started forming at Delhi in 4 October 1941 along with an Air Land-

ing School. The Brigade consisted of the 151st, 152nd, and 153rd Parachute battalions and other ancillary units. The first Indian officer to join the brigade and jump was Lieutenant A. G. Rangaraj, of the Indian Medical Service, who was posted as medical officer of the 152nd. The brigade took part in the Burma campaign and fought valiantly against the Japanese in March 1944 in the vicinity of Imphal. In May 1945, a composite battalion of the brigade was dropped at Elephant Point for the capture of Rangoon. On partition, India inherited the headquarters of an airborne division and two parachute brigades. Eventually, this force was reduced to a Parachute brigade. These battalions saw action in Jammu and Kashmir during 1947-48, notably at Jhangar, Shelatjang, and Naoshera, and earned 6 Maha Vir Chakras, 25 Vir Chakras, and 69 'Mention in despatches'.

The Parachute Regiment of today was formed on April 15, 1952 absorbing three former parachute battalions. A separate depot was opened at Agra at the same time. A reserve of parachutists was created. A new badge was adopted by the Regiment, and the new Shatrugit emblem by the Parachute Brigade. In 1954, a common flag was provided, and in May 1962 a training wing was established for direct recruitment and training of the new recruits. The depot and the training wing were later combined into the parachute training centre.

The Regiment was presented its new colours by the then President of India, Dr. Zakir Husain, on October 6, 1967. The colourful ceremony ended with a para drop and a march past.

During the twenty-five years of its existence, the Regiment has won laurels in such diverse theatres of peace and war as Korea, Gaza, Goa, Kutch, Kashmir, Punjab, and Bangladesh. In December 1961, the 50th Parachute Brigade led the advance and was mainly responsible for the liberation of Goa. During the Indo-Pak conflict of 1965, four of the parachute battalions saw action at the Rann of Kutch, Haji Pir Pass, and the Wagah sector. In 1971, the Parachute brigades saw action in both the eastern and the western theatres. The Para Commandos proved their mettle by carrying out successful raids in Jammu and Kashmir and Rajasthan sectors. In the course of these assignments and operations, our para troopers have won many coveted military decorations and awards, including 4 Maha Vir Chakras, 6 Ashoka Chakras, 13 Vir Chakras, 14 Sena Medals, and 120 Mention in despatches.

The authorities are constantly seeking ways to improve the safety of our parachutists. Reducing the casualty rate from injuries and dispersion on drop has some obvious benefits and is not unlike the continuing search to reduce casualties from diseases. Compared with the early parachuting equipment, the equipment used today virtually eliminates malfunctions and ensures that the parachutist can make a controlled landing safely, most of the time. Two of the most significant design developments in this regard are the anti-inversion net and the steerable parachute. Of the many misfortunes that can befall a paratrooper, the most widely feared is parachute malfunction.

In the early days of parachuting, this

fear was compounded by unreliable equipment, improper exit techniques, disorientation, frequent lack of a reserve parachute, and the fear generated due to the unknown aspect of the new parachute. Thus the paratrooper masked and verbalized these fears in impossible legends, boasts, and songs!

The history of airborne warfare is replete with improvements in equipment, techniques, and training which have lessened the possibility of a malfunction to a statistical probability. In the same vein, the introduction of the anti-inversion net may further lower the probability of a malfunction to zero. The anti-inversion net is of mesh, sewn to the skirt of the canopy. The net prevents a portion of the canopy from going through the lines on the opposite side and developing into a partial inversion or a total inversion. It is reported that there have so far been only two recorded malfunctions. One of these was traceable to faulty packing while the cause of the other has not been definitely determined. This single improvement, therefore, has probably been more important than all others in allaying the anxiety of the paratrooper.

The rapid rise in the popularity of sport parachuting has led to the introduction of the steerable parachute for military use. Thus, it is obvious that injuries upon impact are lessened when the parachutist can control his altitude and direction just before the moment of impact on the ground.

The MCI-IB —the latest version— includes the anti-inversion net. It is controlled by two toggles extending

from the canopy to the right and left front risers. To turn right, the parachutist simply pulls the right toggle in a downward motion while he has turned the desired azimuth. Control to the left is effected in the same manner with the left toggle. Before landing, the parachutist turns to face into the wind, thus eliminating the lateral vector of movement; he completes his landing sequence similar to that when jumping with a non-steerable parachute. The steering capability, made possible by the MCI-IB parachute, has permitted men to land closer to target or equipment, and reduce midair collisions in mass tactical drops, and has drastically reduced drop zone injuries and extended the 'safety zone' for a safe landing.

The adoption of a new type of harness to replace the well known and dependable type with the quick release device has also been introduced now. The new type of harness is ideally suited for sport parachuting. Its advantages include less time to put on the equipment, fewer checks required by stick commanders, the elimination of the quick release device without sacrificing parachute safety, and increased wearer comfort.

Some ongoing projects that further illustrate the high interest in improving and reforming the concept of parachuting are inflight rigging techniques, dropping zone assembly aids, the low altitude parachute, and night jumping. From this it is highly evident that the popularity of parachuting as a sport is on the rise.

Mukesh Chopra

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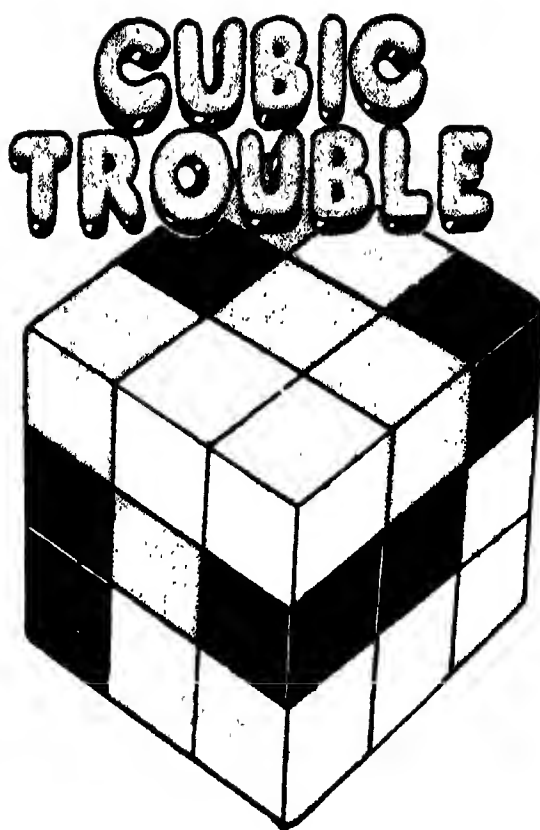
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**R**AKESH and Madhu eyed the Rubik's Cube Uncle Santosh held in his hand.

"Give it to me, Uncle, let me try it. After all, it's a game boys play," Rakesh made his claim.

"Who do you think you are? A Brains Trust? An Einstein? Or a Ram-anujam? You're just a clumsy ten-year-old lad with as little brain as a bird's," Madhu reacted sharply, because she was upset by Rakesh's sweeping statement that only boys should play with the Rubik's Cube.

"Maybe, my dear sis. But, when it comes to brains, the birds have more grey matter, so you will be rated far behind the birds," Rakesh hit back.

"Give it to me, Uncle. I am elder to him, so the Cube should be given to

me first. I'll give it to Rakesh after I have tried it out," Madhu pleaded with her uncle.

"The Cube is a toy. Naturally, the younger of us has the first claim," Rakesh argued.

"My God! Can't you keep your mouth shut for once ... Well, I think a good idea would be to toss to decide who shall have the first chance with the Rubik's Cube," Madhu offered a way out.

"Agreed," said Rakesh and took out a twenty-five paise coin from his pocket. He readied himself to toss the coin. He paused for a minute, then said, "Heads I win."

"No. Heads I win," Madhu countered.

"Both of you can't have heads," Uncle Santosh commented, smiling to himself.

"Why not? We both have heads. And, then, it is Rakesh who has a tail. That's what Mummy says. She calls him a boy who does monkey tricks often."

"Give me the coin. I'll toss it. If it is head up, Rakesh gets the Cube. If not, Madhu gets it," Uncle Santosh stepped in firmly.

He threw the coin up, giving it a twist as it started its flight in space. It flew up, close to the ceiling and then began to descent. At last, it landed with a metallic sound on the floor. Rakesh bent down. Madhu, too, bent down simultaneously. Their heads knocked against each other and they became dizzy. They drew away, rub-

bing the sore spots. Then they bent down again and examined the face of the coin.

"It is heads, Uncle. Give the Cube to me," Rakesh screamed.

"That is all right with me. But you must give it to me after ten minutes."

"Why? When we tossed the coin, you agreed that it will decide who will get the Cube. I have got it. And I won't give it to you until I get the colour on each face distinct."

"You can do it till the cows come





home. You still won't solve the Cube. You won't get the same colour even on one face. So, where is the question of getting the colours right on each of the six faces?" Madhu remarked.

"Why?"

"Because there are more than 43 billion possible arrangements of the cube. Only one of them is right. So, you may work all day and all night, for several weeks, and still be no nearer to the solution," Madhu clarified.

"I won't have to work that long," Rakesh brushed her warning aside.

"Well, I'm sure of one thing. You will turn grey, become old and bent, and yet the solution will be beyond you," Madhu sneered.

"When I go grey, your hair will be jasmine white," Rakesh hit back.

Madhu decided to wait and watch Rakesh play with the Cube. Rakesh turned the mini cubes, while Madhu eyed his movements with a sneer. When he could not get the same colour even on one of the faces of the Cube after five minutes, she came in. "You won't get the solution. What you will get will be Cube Thumbs."

"What's that?"

"Something like the Tennis Elbow or the Achilles Heel. Cube Thumbs is the malady which affects those who play too long with the Cube."

"Shucks!" Rakesh hissed, turning the mini cubes frantically.

Ten minutes later, Madhu could not contain herself. She shot in, "Shame on you, Rakesh. In ten minutes, you have made no progress with the Cube.

But, that thirteen-year-old boy of Surrey, Patrick Bossert, can solve it in just a minute. And he has written a book, *How to Solve the Cube*, and it has sold more than any other book in recent times."

"Make yourself scarce, dear sis, if you want to be in one piece," Rakesh boomed angrily.

"That's all that comes to you naturally. You can pull things apart, break them into pieces. With the Cube, too, you can only put it out of shape, pull out the pieces. You can never solve the Cube."

"I'm going to pull it apart and see the 27 pieces of the Cube, rather than give it to you."

"Which only shows how little you know of the Cube. It has only 26 mini cubes!" Madhu retorted.

"Absurd. There are nine cubes on each face. And there are three faces. So there have to be 27 cubelets. Don't try to pull a fast one on me."

"That's the trouble with you. You're stubborn, mulish, and won't accept facts even someone who knows them tells you," Madhu replied.

"Oh, great! I've got the same colour on the top face," Rakesh was beside himself with joy.

"One face in nearly half an hour is no achievement," Madhu commented.

"Wait, sis. I'm on my way to becoming a Cube Wizard."

"If only wishes were horses!"

"Shut up!" Rakesh ground his teeth.

"You've words enough to shout at me, not brains enough to solve the Cube," Madhu rubbed it in.

"Wait and see," Rakesh worked on the Cube with complete concentration.

"See what? The top face which was showing green five minutes ago has now a splash of colours," Madhu pointed out the mess that Rakesh was making with the Cube.

"Leave me alone, you big mouth," Rakesh fretted.

"Give it to me. Let me try," Madhu pressed her claim.

"I won't give it to you till I finish."

Madhu saw that Uncle Santosh had by now departed.

"That's it. You have had it for nearly an hour. It can't go on for ever.

Give it to me," Madhu seized one side of the Rubik's Cube.

"Leave it," Rakesh pulled at the end he held.

The tug of war continued. Then, suddenly, the children fell on their backs. The Cube had disintegrated. The mini cubes lay strewn on the floor. The two children stood up, hurriedly, and gaped at the cubelets. Then Madhu's face lit up. She shouted, "I told you. There are only 26 cubelets in the Rubik's Cube, not 27."

R. K. Murthi



# Season Starts with Pakistan

**A**MID rain-ruined Tests, the limited-over matches came as bright sunshine during the recently-concluded India-Pakistan cricket series. Two dull draws at Bangalore and Jullundur were well compensated by the two exciting wins by India over Pakistan in the one-day international matches at Hyderabad and Jaipur, not forgetting the out-of-the-blue triumph in the floodlit Prime Minister's Relief Fund limited-over tie at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi.

India did keep their "one-day world champion" reputation intact, but failed miserably to assert superiority over Pakistan in the Test matches. Despite conceding that the Tests at Bangalore and Jullundur were marred by rains, the fact remains that India never looked the superior side capable of beating the visitors from across the border, even if the Tests had been played to the full extent of five days.

The first Test at Bangalore witnessed an unprecedented incident of a captain leading his side out in order to deny a rival batsman his right to continue batting. With the Indian opener Sunil Gavaskar on 86 and six more mandatory overs to be bowled on the final day, Zaheer Abbas led his team out, much to the reluctance of some players, with the sole aim of stopping Gavaskar from getting his century—his 28th Test hundred.

There was confusion all over, as Indian batsmen Gavaskar and Anshuman Gekwad remained on the field along

with the umpires, while Pakistan opted to go out of the field. It was only after much persuasion from the umpires, who made it clear to Zaheer Abbas that the match would be award-

*Javed Miandad*



ed to India if the Pakistan team did not complete the remaining quota of six overs, that the team returned to the field and saw Gavaskar duly complete his century off the first ball of the final over bowled by Mudassar Nazar.

Coming to the academic value of the Bangalore Test, India batted first to score 275, with Roger Binny (83 not out) and Madan Lal (74) steering India to safety from a depressing position of 85 for six. Madan and Binny registered their career-best scores and were associated in a record stand of 135 runs for the seventh wicket.

Pakistan's reply went beyond the Indian total, much due to the efforts of the never-say-die Javed Miandad, who missed his century by just one run. Pakistan scored 288, as Madan took three wickets—a performance which earned for him the 'Man of the Match' award.

India hit 176 for no loss in their inconsequential second innings, with Gavaskar's century being the only redeeming feature. He was well assisted by Anshuman Gaekwad, who remained unbeaten with 66.

The second Test turned out to be yet another drab affair, with Anshuman Gaekwad notching up his maiden double century (201), but not good enough to fetch him the 'Man of the Match' award, which went to Pakistan's graceful left-handed batsman, Wasim Raja, for his enterprising 125 and four wickets. The only dramatic feature of the match was the wicket of Mohsin Khan claimed by Kapil Dev off the first ball of the match.

India could draw some satisfaction from the match for scoring 374 in reply to Pakistan's 337.

■ The one-day ties came as a refreshing change for the cricket lovers, who saw

their heroes play true to the World Cup champions title. India convincingly beat Pakistan by the identical margin of four wickets at both Hyderabad and Jaipur. In between these two matches came the floodlit tie in New Delhi where India registered a great one wicket victory but, sadly, the match had lost its official status as it was played for purposes of charity. Full credit to India for having won the match which was, however, played with all seriousness by the two teams.

Batting first, Pakistan managed 197 for three in 50 overs through some good batting by Mohsin Khan (50), Mudassar Nazar (65), and Wasim Raja (38 not out). Off-spinner Kirti Azad claimed all the three Pakistani wickets for 28 runs.

In their reply, India's batsmen fared poorly, and the score read a miserable 80 for six, with Sunil Gavaskar, K. Srikanth, Mohinder Amarnath, Sandeep Patil, Yashpal Sharma, and Kapil Dev back in the pavilion. Roger Binny joined Kirti Azad, but left at 101. Defeat stared India in the face. But India found the man for the occasion in Kirti, who lashed out 71 runs off 70 deliveries, including four sixes and five boundaries. He got adequate support from Madan Lal, who made 35 with one six and three fours. Kirti made the winning hit off the third ball of the last over off Zaheer Abbas, to bring India a memorable victory in the first ever floodlit match played in Asia. Kirti fittingly won the 'Man of the Match' award.

In the one day International at Hyderabad, spearheaded by the World Cup hero Mohinder Amarnath (60 not out, inclusive of five fours) and Sunil Gavaskar (33) in batting, and medium-pacers Balwinder Singh Sandhu (three

for 27) and Roger Binny (two for 34) in bowling, India coasted to an assertive four wicket win.

Put in to bat, Pakistan crashed for a paltry 151 for eight off 46 overs. Their top five batsmen, including skipper Zaheer Abbas (20), perished for just 62 runs. But Javed Miandad defied the Indian bowlers, to score 66 runs in 163 minutes, studded with four boundaries. He was associated in a 61-run partnership for the sixth wicket with wicket-keeper Wasim Bari, who scored a sedate 18 before he was run out off a smart throw by Sandhu.

*Sandeep Patil*



India achieved the victory target of 152 through three productive partnerships with vice-captain Mohinder Amarnath, who was adjudged the 'Man of the Match', figuring in two of them: a 39-run stand for the second wicket with Sunil Gavaskar and a 38-run stand for the sixth wicket with skipper Kapil Dev, whose blistering 18 was studded with two boundaries and a massive six off off-spinner Mohammed Nazir.

At Jaipur, after being put in to bat, Pakistan scored a measly 166 for nine in 46 overs. The bulk of Pakistan's scoring was done by Zaheer Abbas (48), Mohsin Khan (22), Salim Malek (27), and Mudassar Nazar (27). Madan Lal claimed three wickets for 27 runs, to win the 'Man of the Series' award.

India scored the required runs with 5.2 overs to spare for the loss of six wickets, thanks to two good knocks, one from the willow of dashing Sandeep Patil, who enthralled the spectators with his electrifying strokes all round the wicket. The matchwinning knock of 51 by Patil came in 39 minutes off 28 deliveries and was laced with two sixes and seven fours. Patil was declared the "Man of the Match".

India were also well served by Sunil Gavaskar who got 41, while Yashpal Sharma scored 23 not out.

The series ended with yet another draw in the third Test at Nagpur. Batting first, India made 245 runs on a rain-soaked wicket. Sunil Gavaskar performed well by making 50 in the first innings and 64 in the second. With the two fifties, Gavaskar equalled the Indian record of 35 Test fifties by Gundappa Vishwanath.

Sandeep Patil (6. 26), who replaced

a sick Mohinder Amarnath, and Kirti Azad (4, 0), recalled after his brilliant display in the limited over floodlit match in New Delhi, were quite disappointing. Both fell to wild strokes. Shastri made a sedate 52 in 192 minutes off 143 balls, with five fours, while Kapil Dev scored 32 in 95 minutes off 57 balls, inclusive of a six off Nazir over long on and a solitary four. Test debutant, Raghuram Bhat, could not face even a single ball.

Replying to India's 245, Pakistan scored 322 runs, the bulk of scoring coming from skipper Zaheer Abbas, whose 85 came in 257 minutes off 246 balls with three sixes, a five and eight fours. Incidentally, Zaheer opened his account with a six off Shastri, and later hit a six each off Shastri and Kirti Azad. This was Zaheer's 15th Test half-century.

Raghuram Bhat claimed the first Test victim when he got rid of Javed Miandad (60), who, however, made his displeasure known at the lbw decision. Miandad's 60 came in 190 minutes off 155 balls with six fours—this being his 24th Test fifty. Mudassar Nazar (78) and Moshin Khan (44) were the other main scorers for Pakistan.

Left-arm spinner Ravi Shastri's career-best figures of five for 75 earned him the "Man of the Match" award. Kapil claimed three and Bhat got two wickets.

The last day of the Test match produced the most attractive cricket of the series. Pakistan, the underdogs, came very near to defeating India in a sensational post-lunch development, which saw the Indian middle-order giving a poor batting performance.

From a comfortable 154 for three, India were reeling at 207 for eight, facing sure defeat, before Madan Lal (32 n.o.) and Syed Kirmani (31 n.o.) steered India to safety, as India declared at 262 for eight. The main scorers for India were Sunil Gavaskar (64) and Dilip Vengsarkar (41), while the main wrecker of Indian batting was off-spinner Mohammad Nazir, who bagged five for 72 off 50 consecutive overs. In the remaining inconsequential play, Pakistan scored 42 for one against a bowling attack consisting of Kirmani, Vengsarkar, and Gavaskar. Wicket-keeper-turned-bowler Kirmani took his first Test victim when he clean bowled Pak opener Azeem Hafeez for 18, much to the delight of the other Pak opener, Tahir Naqqash, and wicket-keeper Sandeep Patil.

After the one-month long dull series against Pakistan, the three-month six-Test series against the West Indies should whet the appetite of all cricket fans in India, considering the carefree attitude of the Caribbean cricketers, who also must be looking forward to avenging their Prudential Cup defeat to India.

Lakshmi Rao

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## STOP PRESS

As we go to press, news has come in of Gavaskar's great innings to equal the "29 centuries in Tests" record of Sir Donald Bradman. Next month's issue will carry a special feature on the Bradman-Gavaskar feat, besides the first of the two-part account of the current India-West Indies series.

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# Malaysian Girl Leads Prizewinners

**I**F November 14 every year is "Children's Day" all over India, December 28 this year will be their day for more than 800 children all over the world. What brings them together will be the Prize Distribution of Shankar's International Children's Competition 1983. Invitations have gone to each one of them, though it is too early—as we go to press in the early days of November—to say who will ultimately make it to Delhi immediately after Xmas.

Now, there is not space enough to give you the names of all 837 prizewinners. So, we would only tell you of those who have won the top awards.

This year, the **President of India's Gold Medal** has gone to Malaysia. The proud winner is a 15-year-old girl called **CHAN YORK LAN**. The 20-member international jury found her painting "Together We Stand" the best among—would you believe?—over 100,000 entries?

According to them, the best written work came from 13-year-old **MARIAMMA THOMAS** of Trivandrum in India. Her entry titled "We Play Host to a Family of Tailor Birds" was awarded the **Children's Book Trust Gold Medal**.

The other gold medals—23 of them—called the "**Nehru Awards**" after Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru (see "**Children's World**", November 1983), have been won by children in 16 countries. They are:

**Painting:** ARGENTINA: Carla Linado (14 years) and Maria Isabel Salinas

(15), BURMA: Sandar Win (14); CHINA: Wang Xiaoyu (7) and Xu Shuang (15); CZECHOSLOVAKIA: Karel Skrle (7) and Dana Polednova (8); G.D.R.: Carmen Tattermusch (11); HUNGARY: Edit Bogardi (12); INDIA: Pradipta Sinha (9), Bhaskar Bhattacharjee (13), and Jyotsna R. Bansode (15); JAPAN: Saeko Akiyama (8); REP. OF KOREA: Yoo Jee Yueng (9); MALAYSIA: Teh Leok Van (12); POLAND: Anna Knas (12); SINGAPORE: Lim Sy Hing (15); SRI LANKA: Dharsha Chamindra Hewawitharane (10); and the USSR: Natasha Klaribina (11).

**Writing:** AUSTRALIA: Benjamin Arthur (12); CANADA: Mili Roy (15), INDIA: Pallavi Joshi (15); and MALAYSIA: Lai Oi Ming (14).

Some of the prizewinning entries will appear in the coming issues of "**Children's World**". Our readers will certainly remember Mariamma Thomas. One of her articles appeared in these columns not long ago. She had won a prize in an earlier competition, too. For that matter, gold medallists like **CARLA LINIADO** and **MARIA ISABEL SALINAS**, both of Argentina, **SANDAR WIN** of Burma, and **MILI ROY** of Canada had won prizes earlier. **DHARSHA CHAMINDRA HEWAWITHARANE** of Sri Lanka has consistently won prizes, in 1976, 1978, 1979, 1980 (Nehru Award), and 1982. **BHASKAR BHATTACHARJEE** of India was a winner in 1978, 1980, and 1982.

All those who come to Delhi will be receiving their prizes in person from the Vice-President of India, Mr. M. Hidayatullah. The prizes of other chil-

# Indian Girl Wins Soviet Prize

**F**IVE Indian children made news the other day, when the Soviet Land Nehru Awards for 1983 were announced. They are Renu Mann of Delhi, Shalini Saxena of Lucknow, Sona Agamsharan Patel of Baroda, Biju Pariyar of Gangtok, and Raichandra Rao of Hyderabad. Their paintings on the theme, "Our Friendship for Peace", have earned them a month's holiday at the Young Pioneers Camp in Artek, Crimea, on the Black Sea coast.

For Renu Mann, this will not be her first visit to the USSR. Not long ago she went there to receive one of the five First Prizes in a drawing competition organised by the Soviet magazine "Sovetskaya Zhenshchina" to coincide with the 4th International Book Fair at Moscow. The subject of the competition was "Let's Give the Globe to Our Children". The competition, held prior to the Book Fair, drew 13,000 entries from 44 countries.

The other winners were Anna Adankiewicz of Poland, Takako Ogawa of Japan, and Alena Patsynra and Oksana Gubeidulline, both of the USSR. Renu Mann, like her friends from Poland

and Japan, enjoyed a free trip to Moscow and were hosted by the Book Fair Committee. Their paintings were on display at the Book Fair.

Listen to Renu Mann on her visit to Moscow:

"I was very lucky. For long, I had dreamt of going to the Soviet Union. And that was why I took part in the competition. But I never expected my dream to come true so soon. It is difficult to express in words what I felt when I went to Moscow and visited the

*Renu Mann (second from right) with other prizewinners*



dren will be accepted on their behalf by the heads of the respective diplomatic missions in Delhi.

For the benefit of those who are not aware of the Rules of Shankar's International Children's Competition 1984, we have reproduced the details on page 16 of this issue. Get a crack at it, won't you?



# The Saddle and Reins

**B**Y now you must be familiar with mounting and dismounting your pony. Next in importance comes the seat. This also means the rider's position on the saddle, and his command and control over the horse.

The most common seat, useful for the beginner, is the all-purpose seat. In this position, you place your body in the centre and lower part of the saddle. There are other special saddles for racing and advanced show-jumping.

Now the reins. You must always hold the reins with both your hands. And never pull the reins too hard—the poor horse will be in pain and ultimately develop a hard mouth! A hard-mouthed horse will tend to be very stubborn, and difficult for a young rider to handle.

"Good hands" are an essential part of the horseman. Through his hands, he communicates and establishes a personal relationship with his horse. Always remember to be gentle but firm with your hands. Both the direction and pace of the horse are controlled by the rider's hands.

After a stretch of riding, one must always reward and encourage your horse. Like "Give and take" of the rein. Allow the horse to relax and be free of tension. This response must come like a reflex action.

The horse must not resist the signals given through his mouth. He should respond willingly—this happens only if the signals are not given roughly or harshly.

During the first few lessons, the rider will find it a bit difficult to coordinate the movement of the legs and hands. But only for a while—practice will make you perfect!

The rider should learn to sit erect in the saddle, but not stiff. If you are stiff, your uneasiness will be conveyed to your horse. After this, there can never be a good combination of rider and horse.

Keep your hands still, preferably

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Red Square and other places. It was a completely new world about which I had only read in books. I made new friends with some Russian and Polish girls, who had also taken part in the contest. Together, we went to the famous Soviet Circus and the Bolshoi Theatre where we saw 'Giselle'. It was really thrilling."

On the International Book Fair, she said it was a wonderful event. "We found ourselves in a kingdom of books! We wanted to see everything, but it was impossible—there were too many books. It was a pleasure to see that the Indian books displayed at the Fair drew many interested visitors."

(Courtesy: USSR Information Centre)



*The author, astride her favourite horse, on a common saddle, shows how to hold the reins.*

low over the 'withers'. Your shoulders should be straight and flexible. The upper part of the body should become loose and flexible, along with the movement of the horse, while the lower part of your body should be firmly attached to the saddle. The most important grip is where your inner thigh holds the saddle. This grip develops only with practice. An old Cavalry test of horsemanship was to put a small coin between the rider's thigh and the saddle. He had to gallop with this for about a furlong and still have the coin in place—a most difficult feat, indeed!

Another bit of advice. The reins must never be used as a means of maintaining balance when you are unsteady. The horse is not a machine but an animal with an intense feeling. Remember to treat him gently—with firmness and love.

The next lesson will explain the "Aids" given to a horse.

Sumitra Senapaty

## **HORSE APPEAL**

*Going uphill, whip me not,*

*Going downhill, hurry me not,*

*On level ground spare me not,*

*Of hay and corn rob me not,*

*In pure water stint me not,*

*With brush and sponge neglect me not,*

*Tired or hot, wash me not,*

*Sick or cold chill me not,*

*With bit and reins jerk me not,*

*When you are vexed, strike me not,*

*When past my labour, work me not,*

*And when dead, forget me not.*

Sunita Jakhar (13)

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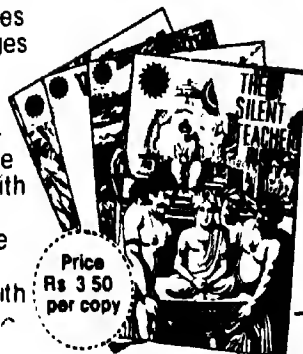
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# Jeevan and Hanu comment on Coming Closer with Communication



I'm so glad we can communicate with each other, Jeevan! Without you to teach me things, where would I be?

Where would I be? I'd be on the ground, you know. I'd be throwing stones at you.

And where would you be without communication?

Where? I'd also be stupid, ignorant, alone, Hanu. As we are now, we've survived millions of years ago.

You mean communication helped you become intelligent human beings?

Of course! Every little thing we learnt, we are able to pass on to others with our communication. Take the first man who accidentally struck two stones together and created fire.

He must have got the fright of his life!

Yes, but once he got over it, he was able to tell others about it.

Is that the only purpose of human communication? To pass on information?

Not just that. There's another equally important function... helping us reach agreement with each other. I'll give you an example: when two dogs stumble upon the same bone, what happens?

They fight, of course. Finally one gets hurt, and the other gets the bone.

Exactly! But suppose they could communicate. They'd be able to figure out some way of settling the matter without having to fight! They'd share it. Or make a rule for deciding who had the right to the bone.

Communication makes it easier for us to live peacefully together. Is that it?

Right. Human beings can settle their differences by talking at the conference table. If not for that, there'd be a lot more war. Communication lets us co-exist as one huge happy family.

Jeevan, let's never stop communicating. Agreed?

Agreed.



1983 WORLD COMMUNICATIONS YEAR

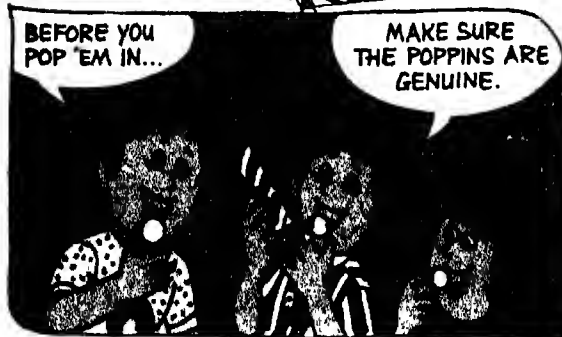
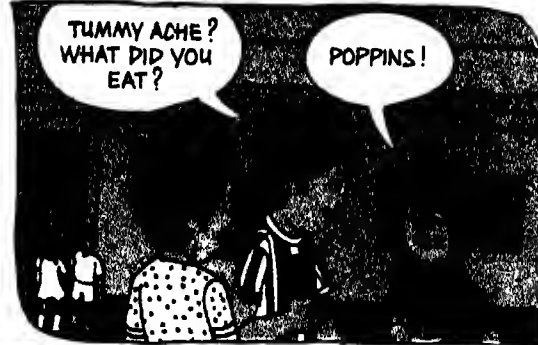


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RECESS IS TIME TO HAVE FUN,  
NOT A TUMMY ACHES.

# RAM AND SHYAM IN SILVER STRIPES



PARLE POPPINS. WATCH FOR THE SILVER STRIPES BEFORE YOU POP 'EM IN.  
NOW THE IMITATORS CAN'T FOOL YOU.





